‘MVP’

Josh Donaldson hears the chants getting louder

metroSPORTS

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Toronto metro

‘Bury me beside them and then we’ll be four’
Abdullah Kurdi
metroNEWS

Your essential daily news | WEEKEND, SEPTEMBER 4-7, 2015 High 27°C/Low 21°C Clear

The little boy who made the world ‘wake up’

Emily Jackson
Metro | Vancouver

Alan Kurdi, 2012–2015

Three-year-old Alan Kurdi was excited to go on a boat ride.

The toddler, who was always giggling, was especially delighted when a mist of water sprayed his face on the boat that promised to smuggle about a dozen Syrian refugees living in Turkey, including his family, to Greece, which was to be the next stop for the Kurdis in their attempt to seek refuge with family in Canada.

“Alan was laughing his head off and he said, ‘Oh, that’s cold,’” his aunt Tima Kurdi recounted from a conversation with the toddler’s father, her brother Abdullah. She lives in Coquitlam, B.C.

The next morning, the world woke up to a photo of Alan’s lifeless body washed up on a Turkish beach. A wave hit the boat, causing it to flip over in a disaster that killed at least 12 people, including Alan’s five-year-old brother Ghalib and his 26-year-old mother Rehan. His father Abdullah survived.

Splashed on front pages and screens around the world, the image of the young boy prompted cries for more action on the crisis. Canadian leaders interrupted their campaigns to address the tragedy and Alan’s connection to Canada.

Alan and his brother were born in Kobani, a Syrian town on the Turkish border, their aunt Tima told reporters at her suburban home, where she was hoping her family would live if they were granted refugee status.

Tima, a hairdresser, has been in Canada since 1992. Her family owns land in Kobani, where they grow olive trees and relatives gather every summer. It was there that Abdullah, a barber, first met Rehan, a seamstress, when he was helping tend the trees.

Alan Kurdi THE CANADIAN PRESS

The pair were married and lived in Damascus before moving back to Kobani when Rehan was expecting their first son, Ghalib.

It’s not clear exactly when the family fled to Turkey, but in a letter to Chris Alexander, Canada’s citizenship and immigration minister, Tima hints at a treacherous journey where her family encountered rebels.

She called their situation desperate and wrote it was impossible for them to return to Syria to get the documents Canada requires to accept refugees.

In the meantime, they lived with another Syrian family in Turkey, with Tima sending money to pay the bills. Abdullah did “everything in his power” to make enough money to feed his family, doing his best to get into construction work.

Tima last saw her nephews on a trip to Turkey in 2014. Alan was a happy baby, always giggling in the background when Tima spoke to her relatives on the phone. He was curious to know if there were lots of toys in Greece.

Tima said the family wants the world to take action.

“That’s what Abdullah said to me: ‘It’s OK, it has to be my kids and my wife to wake up the world. It’s OK. So maybe the others will be safe … it’s written to happen.’” WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Syrian refugee crisis

9 pages of coverage inside

- **Torontonians step up to help refugees in need, pg. 9**
- **Harper says policy change isn’t enough, pg. 12**
- **Questions and answers about the Syrian situation, pg. 16**

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Study based on responses from 84,367 U.S. new-vehicle owners, measuring 244 models and measures opinions after 90 days of ownership. Proprietary study results are based on experiences and perceptions of U.S. owners surveyed in February-May 2015. Your experiences may vary. Visit jdpower.com. ††2015 Cruze LTZ, MSRP with freight, PDI & levies: $28,639. 2015 Equinox 1LZ, MSRP with freight, PDI & levies: $39,164. 2015 Silverado 1500 Double Cab 1LZ 2WD, MSRP with freight, PDI & levies: $47,189. 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Metro will not be publishing on Monday

Market too rich for millennials

HOME OWNERSHIP

Almost half of youth 18-34 would leave GTA: Survey

Jessica Smith Cross
Metro | Toronto

Wes Bos' Hamilton neighbourhood is an up-and-coming place with cool cafés. To people who live in Toronto, he describes it as "Parkdale-ish."

"It's pretty cool," he said. "It's a five-minute walk to the waterfront and the GO Station."

Bos actually did what nearly half of the millennials living in the Greater Toronto Area are considering, according to a new survey: he left the city in search of a cheaper home.

The survey, done in July by the Angus Reid Institute, shows 45 per cent of GTA residents 18 to 34 are "seriously" thinking of leaving the GTA due to the high cost of home ownership.

It's a sentiment that runs high in every age group surveyed but is strongest among young people. Those 55-plus were least likely to report that housing prices are making them seriously consider leaving — but still, 31 per cent of them did.

Bos, a web developer, and his wife, a graphic designer, made their decision to leave by factoring in the effect of housing payments on their quality of life.

So a year and a half ago, they found their three-storey, 140-year-old house in Hamilton and packed their bags.

Wes Bos and his wife Kait stand in front of their new home in Hamilton, in this photo they posted to Instagram, shortly after they purchased the house a year and a half ago. CONTRIBUTED

The six-bedroom house is big enough for the couple to work from home and have plenty of space left over for their new baby — and it cost less than what you might expect to pay for a typical Toronto condo.

It's allowed them significant financial freedom.

"As an entrepreneur, you want to take risks, and if you have a $3,000 mortgage to make every month, it's really hard to make a risk," Bos said. "My mortgage is significantly less than what my rent was in Toronto. Paying it is no problem, and that allows me to be creative with my business."

Bos wasn't surprised to hear many others are thinking of making a similar move, partially because he sees Toronto as a city that's always been somewhat transient.

But Prof. John Andrew, director of the Real Estate Roundtable at Queen's University, finds the Angus Reid results surprising and concerning.

"That 45 per cent is a very high number, and it speaks to the frustration of the cost of entering into the housing market," he said.

Although many people will dream about leaving, most likely won't because they have jobs, families, friends and a life in the GTA, he said. But, even if 10 per cent of the millennials who say they're thinking of leaving actually do, it's bad news for the region.

There is precedent in some U.S. cities, he said. Places like New York, Chicago and Atlanta have lost significant numbers of young people — most taking their skills and education to communities where they can afford to live a more comfortable life.

That kind of "brain drain" hurts everyone, especially companies that depend on the young and well-educated, Andrew said.

BY THE NUMBERS

THE TERRIFYING REALITY

The average detached house in Toronto is selling for more than $1 million — but to 90 per cent of adults living in the GTA, the idea of holding a mortgage on a home that pricey is "terrifying."

That's one highlight from a new Angus Reid Institute survey of 813 people living in the GTA. The public-interest research institute delved into people's fears and hopes — but mostly fears — about transportation and housing in the region.

For millennials, the issues are tied closely together.

They report having longer commutes than people who are older, and are more likely to prefer living close to work. But, they say, they can't afford to.

45%

45% of millennials agree with the statement: "I'm seriously thinking of leaving the GTA because of the cost of owning a home here," compared with 40% of those aged 35 to 54.

48%

48% of millennials say, "I am frustrated with how long it takes me to get to work or school, but I can't afford to live anywhere closer," compared with 34% of those aged 35 to 54, and 23% of people 55-plus.

55%

55% of millennials say their commute is 30 minutes or longer, compared with 42% of those aged 35 to 54, and 23% of people 55-plus.

52%

52% of millennials say housing prices are hurting them and their household, compared with 32% of those aged 35 to 54, and 33% of people 55-plus.

80% of GTA residents agree with the statement: "I'm worried the next generation won't be able to afford to own a home in my community."

80%

15%

15% of GTA homeowners said housing prices are "unreasonably high" when it comes to their own home, but 69% say housing prices are unreasonably high across the GTA.

81%

81% of GTA residents agree with the statement: "People who bought into the market 10 years ago or earlier basically 'hit the jackpot.'"

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Curt Harnett, Chef de Mission for Canada's contingent at the Pan Am Games, says a successful bid could kick-start badly needed infrastructure development. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

Olympic Committee trademarks TO2024

PUSH FOR THE OLYMPICS

Mayor clarifies no decision has been made 'as of now'

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

Toronto's still unofficial Olympic bid has a name — and a trademark: Toronto 2024TM.

The Canadian Olympic Committee confirmed Thursday it has filed paperwork to trademark the phrase, along with Toronto 2024 Olympic Bid and TO2024.

It's one of the first public announcements surrounding the bid, the planning for which has largely been happening behind closed doors. However, Olympic hopefuls shouldn't read too much into the trademark move, said Carl Vallée, executive director of communications for the Olympic Committee.

"The Canadian Olympic Committee has been crystal clear in its intention to lead, advocate and prepare for a possible 2024 Toronto Olympic bid," he said. "The trademark is simply part of that preparation in case it does go forward."

That said, Mayor John Tory "has also been clear that no decision has been made as of now," Vallée added.

The deadline for Toronto to express interest in hosting the 2024 Games is Sept. 15. Tory reportedly has been consulting with stakeholders — although he won't name them — and has said he expects the cost of a bid to be borne largely by the private sector.

Curt Harnett, a former Olympic cyclist and public face of the recent Pan Am and Parapan Am Games, said the city has a real shot at landing the Olympics if it indeed does bid.

"When Toronto built all their Pan Am facilities, they met the highest standards provided by each international sport federation," he said. "They're capable of hosting world championships and other major events, including the Olympics."

> **The Pan Am Games showed the Americas what we were capable of. Now it's time to show the world.**
> Curt Harnett

Harnett said a successful Olympic bid could kick-start badly needed infrastructure development in the city.

"We did more in the past five years for Pan Am than we did in the past 15," he said. "If bringing the Olympics to town can escalate the deadline for something like the downtown relief subway line or other initiatives that benefit citizens, I don't see why we wouldn't explore that."

THIS LONG WEEKEND
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4 TO MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2015
All stores closed for Labour Day, Monday, Sept. 7, 2015, EXCEPT: Toronto Queen Street, Toronto Bloor Street, Mississauga Square One, Brampton Bramalea City Centre, Markham Markville Shopping Centre, Richmond Hill Hillcrest Mall, Newmarket Upper Canada Mall, Windsor Devonshire Mall, Kingston Cataraqui Town Centre and Ottawa Rideau Centre.
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IN BRIEF

PC leader finally wins seat

Progressive Conservative Leader Patrick Brown has won a seat in the Ontario legislature in a byelection four months after winning the party leadership.

Longtime Progressive Conservative MPP Garfield Dunlop resigned his Simcoe North seat this summer so Brown could run.

Brown won the party leadership in May.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Councillors want licence pulled

MUZIK

Shootings cause to deny liquor rights: Perks, Layton

As the deadline arrives for functioning security cameras to be installed at Muzik, two city councillors are making a move to remove the nightclub's liquor licence.

Mike Layton and Gord Perks are now looking to have the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) suspend or revoke Muzik's liquor licence.

In a letter published online Thursday, the two councillors request that city council get the city solicitor to spur the AGCO to issue a formal proposal to yank Muzik's alcohol privileges in the wake of last month's shootings there that killed two people.

The club, which opened in 2006, has seen its recent operations particularly marred by violence and controversy.

According to the two-page letter, the AGCO conducted 14 inspections of the establishment — on the CNE grounds' Saskatchewan Rd. — between the years of 2012 and 2015; six infractions were logged, ranging in severity from narcotic use to permitting disorderly behaviour on the premises.

"The history of violence at Muzik nightclub makes it pretty clear to me and Councillor (Mike) Layton that it's time to pull their liquor licence. They haven't been operating safely for years, they shouldn't be allowed to operate anymore," Perks said Thursday.

"I don't have another nightclub that has this kind of a record, whether it was private property or public property, I would be taking this action. The fact that it's on city-owned property just makes it worse."

Requests for comment from Muzik were not immediately returned.

Municipal Licensing and Standards will wait for direction from council before addressing the request, said city spokeswoman Tammy Robbinson.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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These conjoined houses on Shaw Street were sold last week and are expected to be torn down. COURTESY VIK PAHWA

REAL ESTATE

Crooked houses off the market

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

$630,000

The selling price for each of the homes.

A pair of famously crooked homes on Shaw Street are about to tilt their way into the sunset.

The houses, located at 866 and 868 Shaw St., just north of Bloor Street, were sold last week, according to Re/Max Canada.

In a rare move for Toronto's red-hot real estate market, the dilapidated homes actually sold for less than asking. Listed (no pun intended) at $688,800 each, the pair of houses were sold to the same buyer for $630,000 apiece.

"They sold themselves," Re/Max agent Mike Palmieri said. "Finding vacant land in that part of Toronto is hard."

Palmieri said the buyer plans to tear down the houses and rebuild.

"Those homes were almost 100 years old. They were in disrepair and it was time for them to go," he said.

The crooked houses had become something of a landmark in the neighbourhood and made frequent appearances on social media.

The homes were built atop Garrison Creek, and their tilt is believed to have been caused by shifting infill.

"We put in an offer on the house on the right in 2007," commented one Reddit user in a thread about the crooked homes in April. "It was gorgeous inside, but you could put a pencil on the floor and it would roll to the other side of the room."

> **Those homes were almost 100 years old. They were in disrepair and it was time for them to go.**
> Re/Max agent Mike Palmieri

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Retailers fight to stay open on stats

SHOPPING

Union rep says workers need holidays off

Canada's largest private sector union will fight retailers' attempts to scrap the city of Toronto's holiday shopping bylaw, which requires most stores to close on nine annual statutory holidays, including Labour Day.

Unifor says it's seeking a meeting with city hall officials in the wake of reports that retailers want to get rid of the bylaw.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers said it's hoping to re-open the issue at city council on Sept. 30. The city solicitor is expected to report on the impact of a recent court ruling which found that Longo Brothers Fruit Markets Ltd., an independent grocer, met the definition of a business that sells "prepared food" and was therefore exempt from the requirement to close.

The decision could mean that other supermarkets might open on statutory holidays, federation vice-president Gary Sands said, since most sell some prepared foods.

The city argued the exemption was meant to apply only to restaurants and fast food outlets, but the wording of the bylaw was sufficiently vague that Justice of the Peace Sheine Mankovsky said in an Oct. 2014 decision that Longo's qualified for the exemption. Appeal court judge Marvin Zuker upheld the lower court ruling in June.

The city's licensing department and legal staff have been reviewing the decision, which could result in the city re-drafting that section of the bylaw to make its intention clearer.

> **It's customers that should decide store openings, not councillors.**
> Gary Sands, Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers

But the grocers said they plan to press council to remove the ban on holiday shopping for all retailers.

Unifor noted that what happens in Toronto can have repercussions across the province.

The union plans to request a meeting with city staff to press their case.

The bylaw has already been thoroughly reviewed in the last three to four years, noted Jenny Ahn, assistant to Unifor's national president, adding the city opted not to make any changes.

It's unclear whether any additional retailers plan to defy the bylaw on Labour Day, which falls on Sept. 7 this year. Some have done so in the past, despite the risk of receiving a ticket that comes with a maximum penalty of $50,000.

Some retailers are exempt from the bylaw, including small drug stores, convenience stores and stores in five designated tourist areas, including the Eaton Centre. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A shopper browses an aisle at the Applewood Village Longo's store. Unifor plans to contest retailers' efforts to do away with the city's holiday shopping bylaw. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

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Toronto helps Syrians in need

HUMANITARIANISM

Group secures sponsorship approval for refugee family

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

The wait can't be over soon enough for a Syrian family that wants to come to Toronto — and for the Canadians who are helping out.

Save A Family From Syria, a city-based initiative working to sponsor Syrian families from Lebanon refugee camps, is concerned about the escalating situation and the desperation it creates for refugees.

The group, born of a partnership between the First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto and the Muslim Association of Canada, has secured approval for the sponsorship of a family of four — dad Talek, mom Walaa and their two daughters, Sedana and Mawal. The family has been living in Lebanon for the past two years since fleeing the conflict in Syria. They are now waiting for a visa appointment in Beirut, said Annette Wilde, who leads the effort.

Dad Talek, mom Walaa and their daughters Sedana and Mawal are the first family receiving assistance from the Toronto-based Save a Family from Syria group. CONTRIBUTED

Annette Wilde of Save a Family from Syria holds a pamphlet that describes the group's effort to relocate a family of four to Toronto. LIZ BEDDALL/METRO

"We are very worried about them," she said. "They are living stateless, without paper, without income. It's very, very scary."

To help keep the family's hopes up as they wait, the group is now sending books to help them learn basic English. Children from the congregation donated some of their favourite books, writing down their names and sending their own photos as well as those of the sponsoring group.

"Just trying to make sure that they know we are thinking about them and we haven't forgotten," said Wilde.

It's a small but worthy undertaking, despite challenges associated with delivery, she said.

> **People are losing hope that we can help them, and may soon end up dying on the trains and waters trying to cross over.**
>
> Annette Wilde, Save a Family from Syria

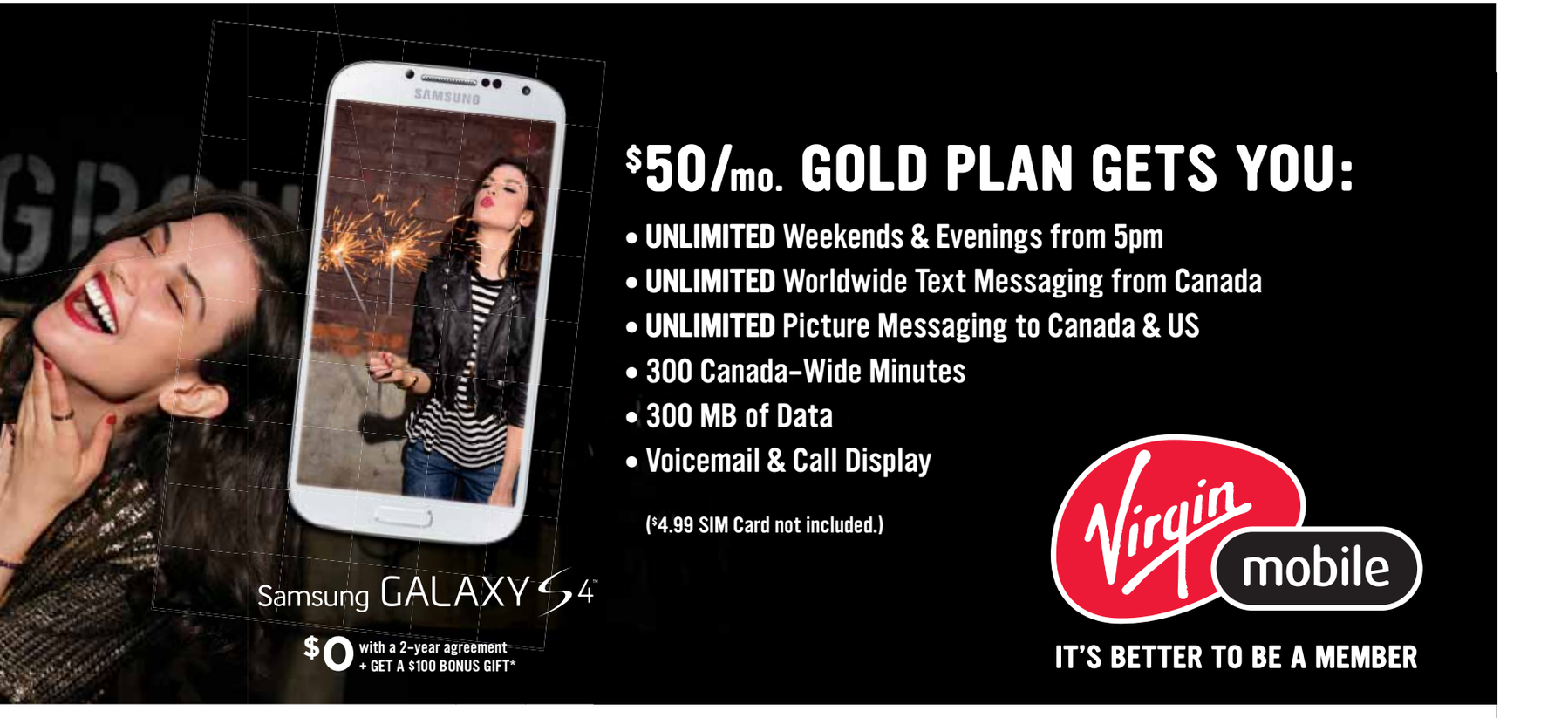
"We sent about $30 worth of books for $175 delivery fees," she said.

The first fundraising effort raised about $60,000, enough to start the process of sponsoring a second family.

Wilde said they'll continue to seek help from the communities and try to sponsor as many families as they can.

What worries her most is the long wait.

"People are losing hope that we can help them," she said, "and may soon end up dying on the trains and waters trying to cross over. It's very distressing."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Fatima Kurdi speaks to reporters outside her home in Coquitlam, B.C., on Thursday. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO

‘Step in and help the refugees’

metro The Syrian Crisis
The Tragedy

Aunt speaks out about family’s plight seeking asylum

The aunt of two drowned Syrian boys recalled her brother’s harrowing battle to save his sons, at two emotional news conferences Thursday in Coquitlam, B.C., and said the tragedy would help wake people up and pay attention to the migrant crisis.

“Now the whole world is going to watch my story. Where was all the world before when my kids were hungry? When I didn’t have a job?” said Tima Kurdi.

“I want to tell the rest of the world, at this point, to step in and help the refugees.”

Kurdi said her brother Abdullah described to her the horror of the boys dying in his arms and screamed: “Please don’t die!” at their lifeless bodies.

“He said he tried with all his power,” she said.

Kurdi addressed the media twice Thursday, in order to clarify her family’s plight seeking asylum in Canada.

She had applied for refugee status in Canada for her brother Mohamad, and planned to apply for Abdullah next. But when Mohamad’s application was denied, she knew there was no hope bringing Abdullah here.

Kurdi said she started Mohamad’s application first because his children were older and needed to be in school.

“It was really bad to tell them this ... ‘I’m sorry I can’t bring you here,’” she said.

Mohamad settled in Germany, and Abdullah wanted to follow with his own family. But Abdullah’s wife was scared of the perilous journey across the water to Greece, Kurdi said.

“She said to me, ‘I really don’t want to go, I don’t know how to swim,’” Kurdi said. “I said, ‘Just put your life jacket on, you’ll be fine.’”

Kurdi said she did all she could to help her brothers and their families, including wiring them $5,000 to help pay the smuggler for their escape.

“I shouldn’t have sent the money,” she said.

Kurdi said she moved to Canada in 1992 after marrying a Canadian and worked to bring family members to Canada and safety.

Asked what should be done to prevent future tragedies, she said: “Stop the war.”

She said Abdullah now wants to travel to their hometown of Kobani in Syria near the Turkish border to bury his boys.

“He has to bury them in their own country,” she said.

He also wants to put bananas on their graves, as it was their favourite treat, she said.

Kurdi praised NDP MP Fin Donnelly for trying to help and delivering a plea for assistance to Conservative immigration minister Chris Alexander.

“And no response,” she said.

Abdullah told reporters after identifying his sons’ bodies that Canadian officials had offered him citizenship after seeing what had happened but that he declined. The Canadian government denies offering him citizenship.

Kurdi said she has not heard of anyone being offered citizenship, but wishes her family could be reunited in Canada.

“But this is the law and you have to follow it,” she said.

The Kurdi family had made a privately sponsored refugee application to the Canadian authorities that was rejected in June due to complications with applications from Turkey.

Kurdi said the family had money and plenty of room to house little Alan Kurdi, his brother and parents.

Security officials in Mugla said the bodies of Abdullah’s two sons and wife would be flown via Istanbul to the southeastern city of Sanliurfa, from where they would be taken by road to the Syrian border town of Kobani.

Kobani, the family’s hometown, has been the scene of intense fighting over the last year. In recent months Kurdish regional forces have been trying to repel attempts by Islamic State to recapture the town.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

I wasn’t asking the Canadian government to drain the system. I can pay for everything.
Tima Kurdi, aunt of two drowned Syrian boys

TURKEY

Turkey has won international praise for taking in two million refugees since the Syrian civil war began in March 2011, spending $6 billion caring for them and receiving just $400 million in outside aid.

But it has warned it is reaching capacity, and thousands are now making the perilous journey by boat from Turkey to Greece in a bid to enter Europe.

“European countries, which have turned the Mediterranean, the cradle of the world’s oldest civilizations, into a cemetery for refugees, shares the sin for every refugee who loses their life,” Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said.

In this June 8, 1972, file photo, South Vietnamese forces follow after terrified children, including 9-year-old Kim Phuc, right, as they run down Route 1 near Trang Bang after an aerial napalm attack on suspected Viet Cong hiding places. It remains to be seen whether the photo of Alan Kurdi's lifeless body on a Turkish beach will, like the photo of Phuc, will galvanize people into action. NICK UT/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Image recalls past horrors

metro The Syrian Crisis
The World Reacts

Photo of dead child on beach part of a sad global legacy

The photo of the dead three-year-old Syrian boy on a Turkish beach is haunting. It captures everything we don't want to see when we tap our phones or open our newspapers: a vicious civil war, a surge of refugees, the death of an innocent.

The image of little Alan Kurdi is hammering home the Syrian migrant crisis to the world, largely through social media. Alan died along with his five-year-old brother and their mother when their small rubber boat capsized as it headed for Greece.

The Associated Press distributed the photos to its subscribers. The photos were from the Turkish news agency DHA.

"It is a very painful picture to view," said Peter Bouckaert, who as director of emergencies at Human Rights Watch has witnessed his fair share of painful scenes. "It had me in tears when it first showed up on my mobile phone. I had to think hard whether to share this."

But share, he did. Bouckaert, who is in Hungary watching the crisis unfold, said people need to be pushed to look at the "ghastly spectacle" so they can, in turn, prod governments to help the suffering Syrian people.

Still, will the disturbing image galvanize people into action? Will it be like other seared-in-our-memory photographs — a vulture hovering over a starving child in Sudan, a girl fleeing a napalm attack in Vietnam, the child in a firefighter's arms after the Oklahoma City bombing?

Or will it become just another of the many images on social media, lost amid the din?

"One of the things about this story is that it's really difficult sometimes for the world to get a handle on it," said Al Tompkins, a senior faculty member at the Poynter Institute, a centre for media studies in St. Petersburg, Florida. "Regardless of the technology, a singular iconic image can still touch us in ways."

And that singular image is often of a child. That was the cold fact that unsettled people around the globe.

Kathleen Fetters-Iossi, a 47-year-old fiction writer from Wisconsin, said she hopes people share the images to create awareness, then go beyond that to try to help in some way. But she has her doubts any concrete action will come of it.

"Most Americans, if they're just now becoming aware of this issue, will ultimately feel there's nothing we can do," she said. "They feel like we can't handle our own immigration problem, let alone Europe's. Social media can help by creating wider awareness, but ultimately, 'clicktivism' didn't help the Nigerian girls, and it's not going to help those migrants." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CANADA'S ROLE

World's media note Canadian connection

Canada made negative headlines around the world Thursday as news outlets relayed information — some of it erroneous — about the Canadian connection to the lifeless Syrian toddler who washed ashore on a Turkish beach.

Some international media coverage focused on Canada's role in the tragic death of Alan Kurdi, his five-year-old brother and his mother, details of which shifted over the course of the day.

Initial news stories reported that the family had been refused asylum in Canada.

However, the boy's aunt in British Columbia later explained that, while the family wanted to come to Canada, the boy's father had not yet formally applied for safe haven. It was another relative, the boy's uncle, who had applied and been rebuffed.

In any case, the story circled the globe, with one report saying Canada had offered citizenship to the child's father, the only surviving member of Kurdi's family, but he had declined.

A headline across Italy's La Repubblica website quoted the boy's father: "I don't want asylum in Canada anymore — I'll take my son back to Kobane."

Canadian immigration officials later said no offer of citizenship was made.

The U.K.'s Independent newspaper ran a headline about the federal campaign: "Canadian immigration minister suspends election campaign to investigate why Syrian family's refugee application was refused."

It was a similar headline in Algeria's El Watan newspaper, which carried the early incorrect detail: "Canada refused asylum to the family of little Alan Kurdi."

Most of these stories were sidebars to the bigger-picture issue of the worst displaced-persons' crisis since the Second World War. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Minister at heart of controversy is a rising star in Harper's cabinet

The Conservative candidate who finds himself at the centre of controversy over Canada's response to the European refugee crisis is a respected former diplomat who is considered a rising star in Stephen Harper's government.

Chris Alexander, the candidate for Ajax-Pickering and Harper's minister of citizenship and immigration, dropped his re-election campaign on Thursday after poignant photos of a Syrian boy who drowned off the coast of Turkey were seen around the world.

In an email to Torstar News Service, Alexander said he was returning to Ottawa to be briefed on the migrant crisis.

NDP candidate Fin Donnelly told The Canadian Press that the boy's family had been trying to come to Canada, and Donnelly had personally asked Alexander to look into the case.

One brother had been turned down earlier this year and another still hoped to join his sister in B.C. before his family perished at sea. Before entering politics, Alexander, 46, made a name for himself in the world of international diplomacy.

He worked in the foreign service for 18 years, posted first to Moscow and later Afghanistan, where he became Canada's first resident ambassador. After meeting his wife and starting a family in Kabul, in 2009 he quit diplomacy to return to Canada, where he decided to run for office.

Immigration minister Chris Alexander THE CANADIAN PRESS

In 2011, he beat Liberal incumbent Mark Holland to become MP for the riding of Ajax-Pickering, and despite his age and inexperience as an MP, was appointed to cabinet two years later.

As minister of citizenship and immigration he presided over sweeping reforms to Canada's immigration system that he said were necessary to eliminate fraud and wasteful spending, but were heavily criticized by refugee advocates and opposition parties.

Alexander stood by the changes to Canada's immigration regime, however, telling Torstar last year: "Canadians are proud of the reforms we've brought to the immigration system. It's far better now than it was in 2006."

On Wednesday night, as photos of three-year-old Alan Kurdi's lifeless body were already being seen around the world, Alexander defended Canada's response to the refugee crisis on the CBC, saying the country is "a model of humanitarian action" and was "dramatically" increasing the number of refugees from Iraq and Syria that it would take in. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

REFORMS

The reforms to Canada's immigration system included reducing social assistance to refugees, and imposing stricter conditions on obtaining Canadian citizenship. One reform, which limited refugee claimants' access to public health care, was struck down last year by the Federal Court.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper speaks about the Syrian refugee crisis during a campaign event in Surrey, B.C. on Thursday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Policy won't stop refugee deaths: PM

metro The Syrian Crisis
The Political Fallout

Immigration minister halts campaign in wake of tragedy

Prime Minister Stephen Harper says Canada's refugee policy isn't enough to stop the tragic deaths of refugees in Europe.

"We could drive ourselves crazy with grief, obviously we try to do what we can do to help," Harper said, but he said adding more resources to speed up the flow of refugees is not "of itself a reasonable moral reaction or solution to this problem."

Speaking at a Conservative rally in Surrey, B.C., Harper addressed the refugee crises in Europe that hit home yesterday when photographs of a drowned Syrian 3-year-old boy made headlines. He said he and his wife found it "heart-wrenching."

"I think our reaction to that, the first thing that crossed our mind was remembering our son Ben at that age," Harper said.

"It brings tears to our eyes," he said. "It truly is a heartbreaking situation and a terrible tragedy."

But Harper said the report that the child pictured in the image and his family was denied refuge asylum is "not correct."

"There was no record of an application received for Mr. Abdullah Kurdi and his family," Citizenship and Immigration Canada spokesman Jean-Bruno Villeneuve said in a statement.

"Refugee policy alone is not a solution to this process," Harper said.

News of the tragedy derailed Conservative election campaign events Thursday.

Defence Minister Jason Kenney cancelled a security-related immigration announcement; Harper delayed an infrastructure announcement.

Immigration Minister Chris Alexander dropped campaign plans to rush to Ottawa and "ascertain both the facts of the case of the Kurdi family and to receive an update on the migrant crisis," he said in an emailed statement.

> **The international community has failed. Canada has failed.**
> NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair

"The tragic photo of young Alan Kurdi and the news of the death of his brother and mother broke hearts around the world," Alexander said.

The boys' father, Abdullah Kurdi, told reporters after identifying his sons' bodies Thursday that Canadian officials had offered him citizenship after seeing what had happened but that he declined.

"Canada did not offer citizenship to Mr. Abdullah Kurdi," immigration spokesman Villeneuve said.

Kurdi's sister Fatima said all her brother wants now is take the bodies of his boys and wife back to their Syrian hometown of Kobane.

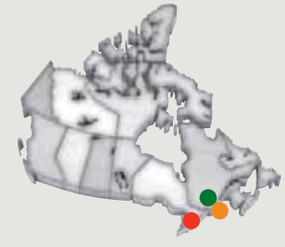
Sobbing at a news conference outside her Coquitlam, B.C. home, the woman who came to Canada in 1992 said Abdullah needed to get about $14,000 in denture work.

The boys' uncle, Rocco Logozzo, told The Canadian Press that the system is designed to fail. He adds his family had money and plenty of room to house Alan and his brother and parents at his home in Coquitlam. Logozzo said his relatives were desperate.

"When they heard (the refugee application) failed, they lost all hope, and in a desperate situation, you make all these wrong decisions," Logozzo said.

NDP Leader Tom Mulcair became particularly emotional at news conference Thursday. "The international community has failed," he said. "Canada has failed." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

WHERE THE LEADERS ARE FRIDAY



- **Justin Trudeau** will be in Toronto and Richmond Hill, Ont.
- **Tom Mulcair** will be in Brossard, Que.
- **Elizabeth May** will be in Montreal.

Stephen Harper's itinerary was unavailable.

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Religious strife at heart of conflict

metro The Syrian Crisis
The Tragedy

Hundreds of thousands are dead, millions are displaced

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

Fighting in Syria has claimed the lives of 240,000 people, many of them civilians, and nearly half of the country's 23 million residents have been displaced.

This is how the crisis began, and what Canada is doing to help.

- **1963**: The Ba'athist regime, led by General Hafez al-Assad, seizes power in Syria in a coup d'état. The Assad family is seen to represent Syria's Shi'ite Muslims, leading to tensions with the country's majority Sunni population, as well as a minority of ethnic Kurds.
- **2000**: Hafez al-Assad dies, passing control of the country to his son, Bashar al-Assad.
- **January 2011**: What's now known as the Syrian Civil War begins with the Arab Spring of 2011. Protests are staged across the country calling for Assad's resignation and the end of Ba'athist rule. Assad responds to the protests with military force, leading to the death of hundreds of protesters.
- **July 2011**: By the latter half of 2011, a coalition of armed forces known as the Free Syrian Army has formed to oppose Assad's military. Fighting erupts in several Syrian towns and the tide of displaced refugees begins.
- **April 2012**: Kofi Annan, acting as the UN representative for Syria, tries unsuccessfully to broker a ceasefire between the Assad regime and the FSA.
- **June 2012**: The UN declares Syria to be in a state of civil war.
- **2013**: Throughout 2013, the conflict in Syria attracts Islamic extremists and other militants from the surrounding region, including the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, or ISIS).
- **July 2013**: Canadian Immigration Minister Jason Kenney pledges to bring 1,300 Syrian refugees to Canada by the end of 2014. The Conservatives claim this target was met by March 2015, although organizations working with the refugees have disputed the government's numbers.
- **October 2014**: The Canadian Parliament approves airstrikes against ISIL targets in Syria. Throughout the conflict, the Conservative government has focused its messaging on combatting extremists in the region rather than the humanitarian crisis. For example, in the government's official timeline of the crisis — available online — the phrase ISIS is used 55 times, while "refugee" appears only twice.
- **January 2015**: The federal government announces plans to take in 10,000 Syrian refugees over the next three years. At this point in the conflict, Germany has already accepted at least 70,000 refugees from Syria.
- **August 2015**: The Conservatives reiterate their plan to resettle 10,000 refugees from war-torn Syria, saying they will open additional spots for persecuted religious minorities. To date, however, the country has accepted only about 2,500 refugees.

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS AND TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

4,088,078
The number of Syrian refugees around the world registered with the United Nations as of Aug. 29, 2015.

$700M
Canada's contribution to aid efforts in Syria.

7.6M
The estimated number of Syrians who have been displaced within the country.

2,302
The number of Syrian refugees resettled in Canada, as of July 27, 2015.

Refugees from Syria walk along the roads of the border town of Idomeni in northern Greece, to cross into Macedonia on Tuesday, Aug. 25. SANTI PALACIOS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

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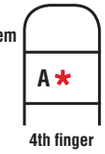

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Photos hit a nerve for Calgary man

Aaron Chatha
Metro | Calgary

Seeing the images of a three-year-old boy drowned on the shores of Turkey reminded Calgarian Adel Bitar of his own plight to prevent a young family member from being drafted into the Syrian army.

On Thursday, news broke that Alan Kurdi drowned with his brother, his mother and eight other refugees when their boat overturned. They were trying to escape from Syria.

Bitar said his own relatives are currently hiding in Lebanon, but their son's passport will soon expire and could force them back to Syria.

"He's almost 18 years old," Bitar explained. "If he's in Syria, he has to join the army. That's why we told them to leave the country. So they're in Lebanon right now. They cannot go back and can't renew his passport. So how can they stay in Lebanon if he doesn't have a valid passport? It's a very hard situation."

Bitar applied to get them into Canada two months ago and is now awaiting an official response.

Bitar also runs a support network called Syrians of Calgary, which operates through Facebook. He said many are desperate to protect their families.

"They want to stay in their country. They want to be safe. But it's not safe to stay there," Bitar said.

"It's so sad to wake up this morning and this news, this tragedy. It's not only this kid. It's happening every day."

Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson says he's watching the unfolding refugee crisis in Europe "with great concern." PATRICK WOODBURY/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Tarek Habash, of the Syrian Assembly of Manitoba, says the Canadian government has to do more to help Middle Eastern refugees. DAVE BAXTER/METRO IN WINNIPEG

Federal government urged to step up

Dave Baxter
Metro | Winnipeg

A member of the Syrian community in Winnipeg says the disturbing image of a dead boy who drowned while his family was fleeing Syria is a reminder of how much more the Canadian government should be doing to help Middle Eastern refugees.

It had been reported the boy's family had tried to get into Canada but their refugee application had been denied in June. However, Prime Minister Stephen Harper denies the families had applied to get into the country.

"It is sad the world has to see horrible images like this in order to act," said Tarek Habash, of the Syrian Assembly of Manitoba.

Canada must start allowing more refugees into the country and speed up the process for them to get in, said Habash.

"Other countries with far less resources have taken in far more refugees," said Habash.

Habash knows Syrian families in Winnipeg who are working to privately sponsor loved ones to come to Canada, but he said the Canadian government is making that process far too difficult.

"It can take one to two years after applying, but there isn't time to wait. These people are often fleeing their homes with nothing more than the clothes on their back."

Habash is also concerned the Harper government will try to fix the problem by stepping up the military fight against ISIS.

"That will not be the solution. This crisis started before the rise of ISIS, and there are refugees fleeing parts of the country not ruled by ISIS."

Habash is calling on Canadian citizens to pressure their local MPs for changes that will allow more refugees to enter Canada.

Ottawa ready to open its doors, says mayor

metro The Syrian Crisis
Canadians Rally

Capital eyeing more refugee settlement

Neal Hall
For Metro

Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson sent a formal letter to Canada's immigration minister Thursday, saying the city wants to open its doors to more refugees fleeing war-torn Syria.

The mayor's urgent outreach to Chris Alexander comes after a photo emerged of a lifeless three-year-old Syrian boy, Alan Kurdi, washed up on a beach on the shores of Turkey, which has sparked worldwide outrage.

The dramatic photo, splashed across newspapers around the world, has put a human face on the refugee crisis in Europe that has worsened in recent months.

The letter said Watson is watching "with great concern" the events surrounding the crisis and affirmed he is committed to assisting with the settlement in Canada's capital of those affected.

"I would like to ask for the support of Citizenship and Immigration Canada and other relevant federal partners to identify what role the municipal sector could play," wrote Watson.

"It would be helpful if you could assign a senior official to liaise with City of Ottawa staff to ensure a strong co-ordination of federal plans on the local level."

> **"I would like to ask for the support of Citizenship and Immigration Canada ... to identify what role the municipal sector could play.**
> Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson

The letter also mentioned Ottawa's history of aiding people in need, an apparent nod to former mayor Marion Dewar, who, in 1979, welcomed thousands of Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian refugees to the city. Her Project 4000 led to residents sponsoring refugees who made Ottawa their home.

Speaking on CBC's Power and Politics program Wednesday, Dewar's son, Ottawa Centre NDP candidate Paul Dewar, mentioned the bold initiative in his heated criticism of how the federal Conservatives have responded to the crisis.

"I remember it well. My mother was the mayor of Ottawa and she opened the doors of Ottawa to 4,000 refugees at the time and the government changed its numbers to 60,000. It was a proud day for our country," said Dewar.

Call them refugees, not migrants: Experts

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

It's a world of difference what you call Syrian people trying to cross over into other European countries.

Some may still be calling them migrants, but two local experts insist they fit every definition of refugees.

"It's a forced migration and at some point, I think, the category of refugee needs to be applied," said Jens Hanssen, a Middle East expert who's been studying the Arab awakening in historical perspective.

A German-Canadian who's lived and learned Arabic in Damascus, Hanssen has been watching as his native country made a distinction between the two terms and accepted Syrians as refugees. He couldn't agree with the policy more, comparing the Syrians to Jews in 1900s. Those Jews who didn't flee Germany ended up in concentration camps, he said.

"We have ISIS taking them into slavery, we have the Assad regime bombing them from the air," he said. "They are as refugees as anybody in history where that term has applied."

Migrant generally refers to people who cross borders into countries where they aren't citizens, said Audrey Macklin, chairwoman of human rights law at the University of Toronto. Refugees are just a subset of migrants, but the term only applies to people escaping war, catastrophe or for any other security concern, she said.

The difference is in responsibilities each category brings. States don't have any obligations to migrants and can even refuse to receive them, but they can't refuse refugees, she said.

"When you call somebody a refugee, you acknowledge that you have obligations toward them," she said.

Politicians who are referring to Syrians as migrants or other terms are simply deflecting the responsibility to protect them, as signatories of the refugee convention, Macklin said.

"I think that those who are fleeing the war right now from Syria are refugees."

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Q&A: Syria's civil war and the migrant crisis

metro The Syrian Crisis
The Tragedy

Here's a look at the conflict and what compels Syrians to attempt the treacherous journey to Europe.

WHAT ARE THEY ESCAPING?

Barrel bombs, chemical weapons attacks, beheadings and starvation, to name just a few. Most of the refugees are driven by an overriding need to escape what has essentially become hell on earth, caught between Syrian President Bashar Assad's ruthless war machine and the Islamic State group's brutality. Many Syrians say most unbearable are the barrel bombs dropped daily on opposition-held areas by Syrian army helicopters. The makeshift, shrapnel-packed explosive devices known by Syrians as death barrels pulverize entire neighbourhoods once they hit the ground. They have killed tens of thousands of people over the past four years, according to human rights organizations. Islamic State militants have also been responsible for the exodus out of Syria. The militant group's takeover of a key town on the Turkish border in June, for instance, triggered a rush of desperate refugees pouring into Turkey, with some throwing their children over the border fence in a desperate attempt to get them to safety.

WHAT ARE THE NUMBERS?

Syria's brutal conflict, now in its fifth year, has touched off the greatest humanitarian crisis of our time, according to U.N. officials. The organization estimates that around 250,000 people have been killed and more than one million wounded since March 2011. About half the country's prewar population of 23 million has been displaced, including more than 4 million who have fled Syria. Tactics such as encircling populated areas have caused untold cases of starvation, malnutrition and chronic illness.

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Over 150,000 migrants have reached Hungary this year, most coming through the southern border with Serbia, and many apply for asylum but quickly try to leave for richer EU countries, like Germany. ZOLTAN BALOGH/MTI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Train takes migrants to asylum camp

metro The Syrian Crisis
The Political Fallout

New standoff after station stops service to Western Europe

Thousands of people desperate to reach Western Europe rushed into a Budapest train station Thursday after police ended a two-day blockade, setting off a wave of anger and confusion as hundreds shoved their way onto a waiting train. But when it tried to drop them off at a Hungarian camp for asylum seekers, a bitter showdown began.

One man threw his wife and infant son onto the tracks, screaming in Arabic, "We won't move from here!" Police surrounded the prone family, pulled the husband away and handcuffed him as he wailed. His wife and diaper-clad boy — apparently uninjured — were freed and allowed to rejoin other migrants.

The scene was just one of many that unfolded Thursday as tempers flared in Hungary's war of wills with migrants trying to evade asylum checks and reach Western Europe.

As Hungary's anti-immigrant prime minister warned European partners that he intends to make his country's borders an impassible fortress for new arrivals, his government struggled to coax thousands of unwanted visitors away from the Budapest transportation hub that has been turned into a squalid refugee camp.

People fleeing war and poverty in the Middle East, Asia and Africa rushed into the Keleti train terminal when police unexpectedly withdrew Thursday morning, ending a blockade designed to stop migrants from boarding trains to their desired destinations in Germany and Austria.

In desperate scenes, people pushed each other to reach the train's six carriages, thinking that getting on board meant they would be first to escape Hungary. But instead of heading to the Austrian border, the overloaded train stopped at Bicske, a town northwest of Budapest that holds one of the country's five camps for asylum seekers — facilities the migrants want to avoid because they don't want to pursue asylum claims in economically depressed Hungary. As the train platform filled with police came into view, those inside chanted their disapproval.

The crowd, angrily waving train tickets to Vienna and Munich, refused police orders to board buses to the asylum centre, pushing their way past police and back onto the train. A day-long standoff ensued in which police and charity workers took turns handing food and water to the passengers, only to have them tossed out train windows in protest.

Back at the Budapest train station, announcements in Hungarian and English — but not Arabic, the language of most of those gathered inside — declared that all services from the station to Western Europe had been cancelled.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MIGRANTS AT LEAST 14 KILLED OFF MALAYSIAN COAST A rescue team unloads the body of a victim retrieved from a search operation near the area where a boat carrying Indonesian migrants sank near Hutan Melintang, Perak, in Malaysia. The wooden boat crammed with migrant workers who were headed back to Indonesia capsized Thursday off Malaysia's western coast, killing at least 14 people, a maritime official said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pope to offer special blessing

metro The Syrian Crisis
The world reacts

Refugees and immigrants in N.Y.C. will meet Catholic leader

Pope Francis will offer a special blessing to a group of immigrants and refugees in New York, including those who are undocumented, highlighting two contentious issues in American politics.

The Sept. 25 encounter with about 150 mostly Spanish-speaking New Yorkers "is about the values and the message that he has articulated as Pope," the head of New York's Catholic Charities, Monsignor Kevin Sullivan, told a news conference Thursday at a church in Harlem.

Francis has made helping immigrants a top priority of his pontificate, decrying what he called the "globalization of indifference" toward migrants and refugees. The Pope will address a joint meeting of Congress on Sept. 24, where he is expected to press lawmakers for generous and welcoming policies toward immigrants. His efforts come as questions intensify about inaction over Syria's civil war and Europe's migrant crisis.

Among those the Pope will bless at Our Lady Queen of Angels School in East Harlem are youngsters from violence-torn Central American countries who crossed the border alone, refugees who fled persecution and are seeking asylum, struggling American-born minorities and disabled immigrants. Francis will also meet a group of Catholic schoolchildren.

Manhattan resident Yvette Suazo, her 14-year-old daughter Chelsea and four-year-old son Kingson hitchhiked from Honduras to the U.S. about two years ago. Life at home had become precarious, with her daughter in danger of being raped each time she left the house, the mother said after the news conference.

Asked whether she had documents allowing her to live in New York legally, Suazo said, in Spanish, "Nada" — nothing. As a result, she cannot look for a job and depends on her sister while her status is clarified.

"But I hope the opportunity to be here legally will open for us," she said in Spanish.

> **"I'll ask him to pray for us and our countries."**
> Cristhian Contreras, who fled Honduras

The insecurity did not deter those who were introduced at the church from giving their names and describing their plight.

"I left because of the crime and so many people on drugs," said Cristhian Contreras, who was 14 when he and a few friends fled from Honduras by foot across the U.S. border.

Now 16, he lives in New York City's Bronx borough, attends high school and is a member of a soccer team with fellow immigrants. His mother works as a housekeeper, but fears deportation. He never knew his father.

Cristhian is counting on the pope's blessing, he said as smile filled his face. He added, this time in Spanish, "I'm one of the few people invited to be with the pope. And if I have the chance, I'll ask him to pray for us and our countries." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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WHEN THERE ARE NO WORDS: ARTISTS SKETCH THEIR GRIEF FOR ALAN KURDI

"How his story should have ended"
SAVE KOBANI, FACEBOOK

"New world map"
RAFAT ALKHATEEB

"I hope humanity finds a cure for visas" @KHALIDALBAIH

Untitled
YASER AHMAD

"La honte" ("The shame")
@JUICEXLX

" ض does not protect you" (This is a quotation from the poet Mahmoud Darwish) @NASERJAFARI

What you can do to help Syrian refugees in crisis

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

Sadly, it took a heartbreaking picture of a three-year old lifeless body, face-down on the shore, for the world to pay closer attention to a crisis in Syria that has raged for more than four years.

At the office of Lifeline Syria, a Toronto-based initiative fighting to bring 1,000 Syrian refugees to Canada in the next two years, phones were ringing off the hook Thursday.

"I think the events of the last few days have really brought the situation to a peak in terms of public awareness and concern," Naomi Alboim, a member of the group's executive committee, told me.

That's a good thing. Don't get me wrong. What's not so good is that tragedy had to happen before the world reacted. Lifeline Syria has been urging people to attend its recruitment and training sessions on sponsoring Syrian refugees for months. At each of the past three such meetings, only about 100 people attended. With the new developments, and many more people coming forward, the Sept. 16 gathering could host well over 300 potential sponsors.

Alboim says individuals and groups who want to get involved should focus on raising funds — Citizenship and Immigration Canada requires that sponsors be able to provide $26,000 for a family of four. More information on how to get involved can be found at www.lifelinesyria.ca.

If you can't sponsor, donate. There are many organizations working directly in and around Syrian borders to help care for people in need.

UNICEF Canada called Syria the most dangerous place to be a child, and launched an emergency appeal to save Syrian children. You can donate through their website, www.unicef.ca.

Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières, or MSF) Canada is another organization that sends medical and humanitarian staff to provide emergency health care to Syrian refugees inside Syria, and in Turkey, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon. You can donate through this page: www.msf.ca/en/donate-now.

More importantly, Canadians should pressure the government to simplify and speed up what has become a slow and complex sponsorship-application process. The Citizenship and Immigration website advises that applications typically take years to come to completion. And even the most urgent and luckiest applicants will wait more than six months.

Alboim, who once worked for the federal government, says she doesn't understand how the waiting times have gotten so long. She remembers that it used to take just days to get an application through.

It's important, as policy-makers seek military and diplomatic solutions, that ordinary citizens continue to think about ordinary lives caught in the turmoil.

"Six days is too long for people in desperation," she says.

It's important, as policy-makers seek military and diplomatic solutions to geopolitical problems, that ordinary citizens continue to think about ordinary lives caught in the turmoil, and find ways to chip in.

Let's not wait for the next tragedy to stir us to action.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

If this is generous, Syrians are screwed. Resign, Alexander.

This should be the end. Not only of the Conservative's heel-dragging to settle desperate Syrian refugees, but of the political career of Chris Alexander.

On CBC's Power and Politics Wednesday, after the world saw the image of a dead boy tossed limply onto sand, the minister of citizenship and immigration scoffed at criticism of his government's response to the global refugee crisis.

The man, who in 2014 grossly misrepresented how few Syrians his government had settled, turned his evasive tongue on the media.

"The biggest conflict and humanitarian crisis of our time has been there for two years, and you and others have not put it in the headlines where it deserves to be," he accused.

A blatant lie, but worse, a callous remark. He was picking fights while people are dying.

The government maintains its refugee policy isn't to blame for the young boys' deaths. It's wrong.

We have an application bureaucracy that some of the boys' extended family had already found impossible to navigate, requiring documents that some refugees can't produce. So, instead, the boy's aunt paid for him, his brother and parents to flee on a boat. Only the father survived.

When the application process is deemed futile by those it could save, that's deadly.

Across the country, Canadians have battled the government to sponsor more Syrian refugees. Nova Scotia lobbied for that right, and met silence. And, because privately-sponsored Syrian refugees must have support from friends or family, Mennonites in Alberta have partnered with Syrians already in Canada to get more refugees to safety.

Yesterday, Alexander touted Canada as home to "one of most generous per capita immigration and refugee resettlement programs in the world." That is technically true, but in no way laudable.

There are four million Syrian refugees. The government has taken 2,500 so far, and, amid mounting pressure and an election campaign, committed this year to take a mere 20,000. If we're the most generous, Syrians are screwed.

Margaret Wente described Alexander in 2011 as an "unabashed idealist" and humanitarian. But there's no idealism in the Conservatives' treatment of refugees. Only an un-Canadian stinginess, and a cold disregard for human life.

No one man or country can fix a global humanitarian crisis. But one man can be held responsible for Canada's lacklustre efforts.

The dead boy is "reminding Canadians of our duty," Alexander said last night, in a mea-culpa appearance on Power and Politics. But time is up: He's already failed in his.

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The anti-Bling Ring: Polish fireman returns giant diamond-studded ring to Paris Hilton

Dreaming the same dream

SUMMER OF 2015

Reports of cinema's death are greatly exaggerated

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse

The summer movie season began amid doom and gloom. I don't mean George Miller's filling screens with his dystopian vision of the future in Mad Max: Fury Road or the career ending fallout from the Sony hack. No, I mean the sky-is-falling predictions that circulated about the movie business.

Box office is down! No one goes to the movies anymore! And best of all: Movies are dead!

To paraphrase Mark Twain, I'm happy to say the reports of the death of cinema have been greatly exaggerated. The summer box office of 2015 will go down in the record books as the second-biggest in history with almost seven billion dollars generated by Minions, Ant-Man, Mad Max, dinosaurs and a sad little girl named Riley.

Superheroes helped put bums in seats, but 2015 won't be remembered as the Year of Ultron. Now that the summer silly season is over, a definite trend toward female-driven movies like Trainwreck, Pitch Perfect 2 and Spy showed that, as Amy Schumer told me, Hollywood has finally realized "our money works, too. Our banks also accept the female dollar."

But it wasn't just women going to the movies. With Jurassic World pulling in 1.6 billion samolians worldwide, it seems everyone put down the remote and went to the cinema.

We didn't rush out to everything — cash grabs like Ted 2 and Terminator: Genisys flopped — but the naysayers, the folks who, in January, were declaring movies to be a thing of the past, an old outmoded form of entertainment in the digital age, missed the point.

People flocked to the movies in huge numbers this summer, filling seats and studio bank accounts, not simply to sit in air conditioning for a few hours as relief from the summer heat or to dine out on popcorn and Twizzlers, but to engage in an age-old ritual.

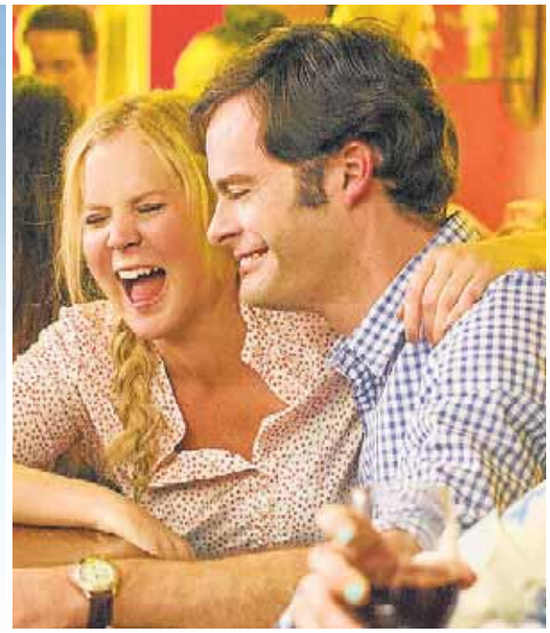
Of course, you can watch movies at home or on your phone. New technology has made it easier than ever to enjoy a film from the comfort of your coach on a 60-inch screen with surround sound and healthy, homemade snacks, but no matter what set-up you may have in your living room, the thing missing is the ancient practice of sharing entertainment with a large group of strangers. It's a primal thing, hard-wired into our DNA, that dates back to when tribes of cave dwellers would sit around fires and tell stories through to the Globe Theatre, vaudeville, the talkies and right up to today's IMAX and AUX screenings.

People have gathered to be entertained since there were tales to be told because there is no better way to enjoy the storytelling experience than surrounded by strangers who are laughing, crying, gasping—whatever — in response to a shared event.

No matter how large your TV or comfortable your sofa, home viewing misses the magical element of community. In the theatre you're getting the sound and the picture the director intended, but more than that the experience brings people together, inspires conversation, respect and triggers actual physical interaction with others. Try that as you stream a movie on your iPhone.

Of course, as in any other community there are a few troublemakers — texters, seat kickers — but I spend more time in theatres than most and find the pros far outweigh any negatives.

In the era of home entertainment the idea of going to the movies may sound old fashioned or quaint but I like the way English novelist Angela Carter described watching a film in a theatre. She called it "dreaming the same dream in unison" and that, for me will never go out of style.



From Mad Max to Trainwreck, people flocked to the movies in huge numbers this summer, filling seats not simply to sit in air conditioning or dine on popcorn, but to participate in a time-honoured tradition, writes Richard Crouse. HANDOUT

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

A Walk in the Woods ★★★
The Transporter Refueled ★
Dragon Blade ★★★
Mountain Men ★★★

HOW RATING WORKS
★★★★ SEE IT
★★★ WORTHWHILE
★★ UP TO YOU
★ SKIP IT

HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS

DreamWorks looking for new park to play in, sources say

Steven Spielberg's DreamWorks film studio plans to part ways with Disney when their distribution tie-up ends in a year's time, an industry source told AFP on Wednesday.

Trade reports suggest Spielberg is looking to negotiate a new partnership with more favourable terms, boosted by the runaway success of Jurassic World, on which he was executive producer.

Universal — the Hollywood studio behind the blockbuster dinosaur series — is being tipped as Spielberg's likely new home by both the Hollywood Reporter and Variety.

According to an industry insider who did not wish to be named, it is too soon to say who will be distributing DreamWorks' production after the Disney deal ends on Aug. 16, 2016.

But the source told AFP that DreamWorks, which Spielberg helped found in 1994, feels out of step with the Disney model and its focus on big, tentpole films such as new Star Wars instalments or Pixar's animated mega-hit Inside Out.

Disney's focus — exemplified by the acquisition in recent years of Marvel, Lucasfilm and Pixar — is firmly on movies that can be spun off into lucrative video games, amusement parks, branded toys and knick-knacks.

DreamWorks meanwhile has been focusing on smaller, adult-oriented movies such as The Help or, more recently, The Hundred-Foot Journey with Helen Mirren.

DreamWorks signed a multiple-year distribution contract with Disney in 2009, after splitting from Paramount.

The last movie to be distributed under the deal is expected to be Spielberg-directed The BFG, adapted from the Roald Dahl novel and slated for release on July 1 next year.

Spielberg's hand was strengthened in Hollywood by this year's Jurassic World $1.6 billion box office takings. A sequel is already slated for release in 2018, also starring Chris Pratt and Bryce Dallas Howard, and with Spielberg as executive producer. AFP

Spielberg executive-produced Jurassic World, third-highest grossing film in history. CONTRIBUTED

THE TV DINNER JESSICA ALLEN

After Will schools a Harvard 'Michael Bolton clone' in the bar where he first meets Skylar, he tells the grad student, "I got her numba. How do you like dem apples?"

There's nothing more annoying than someone recounting their dreams. So let me tell you about a recurring one I used to have: I'm shooting hoops with Matt and Ben (we are on a first-name basis), while we talk about the screenplay for Good Will Hunting II — I'm helping them write it.

I think it was seeing the still baby-faced Damon and Affleck take the stage in 1997 to accept the Academy Award for best screenplay that launched my REM fantasy. Here were two practically unknowns, just a couple of years older than I was, who'd just won Oscars for their story about an orphan-turned-janitor at MIT who could solve equations on napkins that only a handful of people in the world could also figure out.

Good Will Hunting stayed with me — maybe because it's the last film I remember seeing in a theatre with my mom and brother. I can recite nearly the entire thing, which makes me a very annoying viewing companion.

I could see regret in the eyes of my partner, Simon, when we watched it Saturday night. I announced at least five times that my favourite scene was coming up; I recited the jokes (in a Boston accent) before the characters did; and, like clockwork, I cried at the end when Will's therapist Sean, a role which earned Robin Williams an Academy Award, confronts him. "It's not your fault."

THE MOVIE: Good Will Hunting

THE MEAL: Hand-picked apples

Every year around Labour Day, I watch it. Maybe that's on account of the campus scenes — the hustle and bustle of students toting backpacks in lecture halls.

Or maybe it's the apples. You know the scene: After Will schools a Harvard "Michael Bolton clone" in the bar where he first meets Skylar, he tells the grad student, "I got her numba. How do you like dem apples?"

Coincidentally, my neighbour messaged me on Sunday to say that her apple tree was bearing more fruit than she knew what to do with and gave me enough for at least a couple of pies.

The only trouble was when I bit down into one, I knew I couldn't bear to bake them. They are small and tart, with a touch of sweet, and possess a crunch that caused me to have a Proustian moment: These are the apples of my childhood. The kind we'd pick every autumn and devour before my mom could use them up for something else. The kind that made me spit the mealy, imported sort.

I still occasionally daydream about Damon and Affleck. Does Matt now lecture Ben on how to make a marriage last? Do they get together every now and then, and watch J Lo's Jenny From the Block video?

Does something as simple as a perfectly tart apple remind them of bygone days, when they brought their moms to the Academy Awards on the cusp of finding fame and fortune?

Jessica Allen is the digital correspondent on CTV's The Social.

MOVIE BRIEFS

Blanchett to play iconic star of I Love Lucy fame

Actress Cate Blanchett will take on the role of Lucille Ball in an upcoming biopic, according to The Hollywood Reporter.

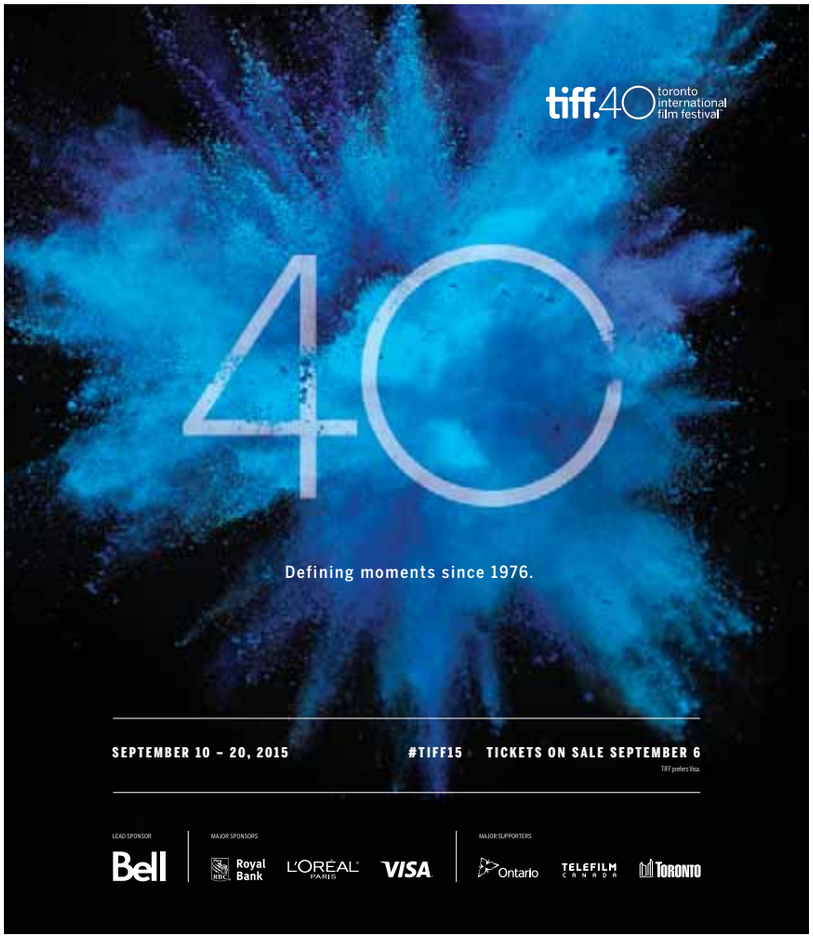
Aaron Sorkin will write the script for the film, which will focus on the iconic actress's life and long-spanning career. Ball won four Emmys during her career and was nominated 13 times.

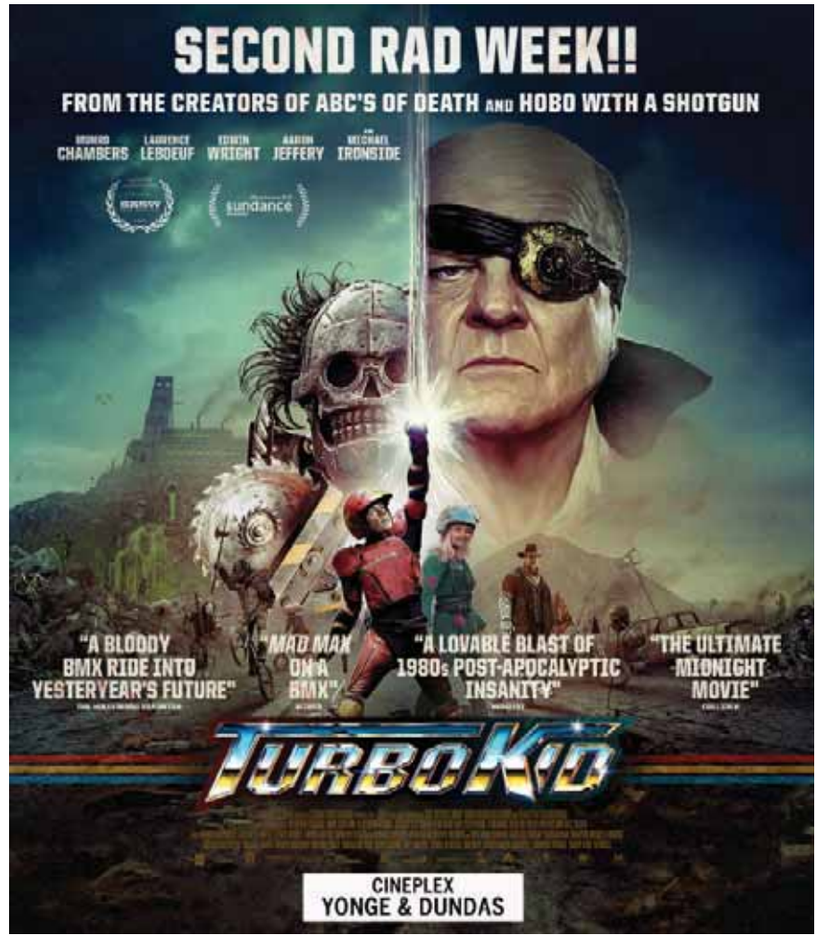
She held the starring role in TV sitcoms I Love Lucy, The Lucy Show, Life with Lucy, The Lucy-Desi Comedy Hour and Here's Lucy.

Lucie Arnaz and Desi Arnaz Jr., Ball's children with husband Desi Arnaz, will produce the film alongside Escape Artists.

Australian actress Blanchett has most recently been seen in films Cinderella and Carol. AFP

Cate Blanchett. GETTY IMAGES





Jackie Chan still kicking it on screen

INTERVIEW

At 61, the action star shows no signs of slowing down

Steve Gow
Metro Life

He may have karate-chopped his way to become one of the world's biggest actors, but even 40 years of action haven't slowed down Jackie Chan. Dragon Blade — the Hong Kong star's latest thriller — sees the much-loved martial artist leading a theorized war epic about lost Romans duelling Chinese guards along the Silk Road trade route. Metro caught up with Chan to find out why, at 61, he's happy to keep filming.

Dragon Blade was the most expensive Chinese film ever made. Why was it so important to you?
The heart of this story is completely captivating. The idea that the world's two greatest civilizations had an encounter that was never recorded in history! How could I not want to make this film? It also allows me to touch on philosophical issues that are important to me and to director Daniel Lee — like peace.

Even though Dragon Blade is an action film, there are bits of comedy. Is comedy just natural for you as an actor?
It's not necessarily deliberate but it just comes out. My next film is also an action-comedy so I guess I can never fully escape the genre. But I'm trying to vary my range and be seen as an actor who does comedy and action. I hope you'll recognize that in Dragon Blade.

You've said that when you were young, box-office success was important. How has that changed?
The box office result was very important when I was young. If my films had no box office, people wouldn't invite me to make another film. I had to feed my family, so making money came first…now I feel a responsibility towards society and the world. So my mind has changed and I don't care so much about the box office. I want to make the movies I want to make and spread my message.

You have lots of upcoming projects — what can you tell me about Karate Kid 2?
The next Karate Kid script is still being written. On the one hand we want a script that everybody is proud of so we've been really demanding. On the other hand, Jaden is getting older. Soon, he'll be taller than me and his dad! But I can see it happening soon.

SEQUELS

More Rush Hour?
The buddy-cop franchise that paired Chan with funnyman Chris Tucker has spawned two sequels with another possibly on the way. "Chris and I both agreed that we need a really good story to move forward," said Chan. "People keep asking me about Rush Hour, so I guess we better work harder."

Jackie Chan stars in Dragon Blade, the most expensive Chinese film ever made. It opens this Friday. HANDOUT

*Some conditions apply. Visit itravel2000.com or call 1.866.969.3325 for details. Package Fares: Toronto departures. Prices shown are per person in Canadian dollars, based on double occupancy and include all taxes, surcharges and mandatory fees and do not include travel insurance and other travel related expenses. Prices are for select departure dates and are accurate and subject to availability at advertising deadline, errors and omissions excepted, and subject to change. Packages are subject to availability at time of booking and are subject to change without notice. New bookings only. Not valid on group bookings. 8635919 Canada Inc. (dba as itravel2000) is a TICO licensed company tico.ca #50021097. 1004 Middlegate Road, Suite 3000, Mississauga, ON, L4Y 1M4.

Good bones for a bad guy

Ed Skrein believes his bone structure may be behind his getting chosen to play evil characters.
HANDOUT

VILLAIN ROLES

Despite his casting, actor says he is a big teddy bear

Ned Ehrbar
For Metro

Ed Skrein swears he's a nice guy, despite appearances.

The British actor and rapper steps in for Jason Statham in The Transporter: Refueled, the fourth film in the fast-car franchise, and he'll soon be seen in the dark comedy Kill Your Friends and doing battle with Ryan Reynolds in Deadpool as the villain Ajax.

When you're stepping into a franchise role like this, what sort of hesitations or trepidations go along with that?
That doesn't play into it for me. It isn't really a factor, you know? And when taking on a role like this, I have the same preparation I would have normally (while) taking on a small European independent movie with a character that's never been played by anyone else. You find the character, you find the wiring and you work out how they make decisions.

Did you watch the previous films to prepare?
I did. I'd never seen them before, and it was so important for me to watch them, to know what the fans expected and what had come previously. I think it would be ignorant of me to have not. And after that it was important for me to just move on and focus on my own approach.

These films are so technically specific.
It's fascinating, and it's why I love my job. I finished The Transporter, and a week later I went onto a Danish independent movie, which I think the budget was three million euros and we had a crew of 26 people. We shot it all Dogma-style, Danish style — very little makeup, very little lighting, one camera — and it was fascinating to see the difference in approach. For me, that's the blueprint going forward, and that's the joy of this craft, is to be able to have the yin and the yang and to balance between the two.

You're also in the darkly comic Kill Your Friends, which debuts at TIFF.
It's an incredible book. Quintessentially dark, British humour. I would've cleaned the toilets on set, I was so excited to be a part of it. Also, it's a different role for me. A lot of the stuff that I've done has been pretty heavy, pretty dark. People tend to gravitate towards me when they want dark stuff. I can't think why. Even when I do comedy, I do it dark like Deadpool and Kill Your Friends.

If you were to speculate as to why people think of you for these darker things ...
I think my bone structure suggests that I am a violent person (laughs). But in real life, I'm a teddy bear. I'm a pacifist in every sense. I think even when I do a neutral face I look like I'm going to stab you in the eye. Darkness is something that I enjoy exploring in cinema because I don't have darkness in my life. My life is very light and just about my family, very calm and ordinary. Maybe the cinema and this craft is my therapy. I get to kill people and beat people up and be immensely horrible and evil on camera and live my days nine to five as a sociopath, and then I go home and I've got it out of my system.

That sounds very healthy, actually.
You should try it.

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The Hills Have Eyes

Deadly Friend

The People Under The Stairs

Scream

In 1984 Wes Craven gave the world Freddy Krueger in A Nightmare on Elm Street. ALL PHOTOS: HANDOUT

Cult of Craven

WES CRAVEN

A look back at the work of the man who brought us Freddy Krueger

Chris Alexander
Metro Life

The lights have dimmed on the world of horror as fans worldwide mourn the passing of one of their heroes: Wes Craven, an icon of contemporary genre filmmaking lost his battle with brain cancer this past Sunday, leaving behind a four-decade legacy of boundary-pushing cinema.

And yet despite his bloody, often perverse resumé (the director started making hardcore pornography before turning his talents to making such still-shocking, confrontation pictures as The Last House on The Left and The Hills Have Eyes), Craven was the gentleman of the genre; a kind and sophisticated human being whose work almost always was alive with lofty ideas, dark humour and slick style.

While some of Craven's films were more successful in defining the parameters of horror history than others, all of his work maintained some level of interest; all of his work mattered.

Metro takes a brief look at some of Craven's most memorable (and not so memorable) works.

Essential Wes

The Hills Have Eyes (1977): This brutal survivalist horror film took its cues from both Deliverance and The Texas Chainsaw Massacre, but emerged as something new: a violent, domestic tragedy by way of sun-baked Spaghetti Western. Craven's first true masterpiece.

A Nightmare on Elm Street (1984): What can be said about this landmark, oft-sequelized slasher shocker that hasn't already been said? ANOES remains a jet black, hallucinatory landmark, ground zero for Craven's deranged, razor-gloved horror anti-hero Freddy Krueger…not to mention the movie that gave us Johnny Depp.

New Nightmare (1994): After having his "baby" turned into a beaten down cartoon, Craven reclaimed Freddy for this mind-bending, self-referential satire that sent up the Elm Street series, while also serving as a genuinely affecting horror film in its own right, one whose tone laid the foundation for…

Scream (1996): Writer Kevin Williamson's snappy script became the salvation for '90s horror at the hands of Craven, whose vigorous directing zapped this "meta" slasher movie to gory, goofy and deliriously clever (almost too clever, according to some critics). After the success of Scream, the genre bolted back to life and never looked back.

Near-Classic Craven

The Serpent and the Rainbow (1988): Craven's stylish attempt to film Wade Davis' popular memoir of black magic and zombies in the fringes of Haiti should have been better than it was. Sophisticated and filled with terrifying imagery, the movie gets bogged down in trying to be a commercial '80s horror film and loses steam towards the finale.

The People Under the Stairs (1991): This maniacal socio-political horror comedy mind-bender is jam-packed with odd-ball action and palpable shocks. But its over-reliance on smartass humour works against its darker ideas and the movie falls apart at the climax.

Fascinating Failures

The Hills Have Eyes Part 2 (1985): Craven made this one on the cheap, quickly, following ANOES's success and it's a legendary misstep. In it, the survivor of the original shocker returns to the desert with his dog, only to find more cannibal mutants. Said dog famously has a ludicrous flashback, an excuse for Craven to pad the films' running time with footage from the first film.

Deadly Friend (1986): A deeply strange, hilariously '80s rethink of the Frankenstein story by way of a sort of John Hughes-ish teen romance that sees the girl next door (Kristy Swanson) rebuilt as a vengeful zombie robot. Terminally goofy but so out there that it sort of stands alone.

Here's to Wes Craven. Gone… but never, ever forgotten.

TIFF 2015 OH LORDY, LORDY LOOK WHO'S 40

The Toronto International Film Festival turns 40 this year and with that milestone birthday comes 40-year-old angst.

The one-time upstart — originally snubbed by Hollywood bigwigs who deemed it a small-town affair — has become one of the industry's biggest players, and as such, an easy target for criticism from all corners.

Depending on who you talk to, it's either too big, too glitzy, or too exclusive.

Even those powerful Hollywood bigwigs were suddenly calling TIFF a bully last year, for demanding that films destined for coveted theatres and time slots premiere in Toronto.

"Americans!" festival CEO Piers Handling huffs, while recalling the brouhaha that forced TIFF to tame its stance this year.

"Which I thought was a bit ironic that they were calling us 'imperialistic' and 'bullies.' The Americans? Some of whom, by the way, were my closest friends."

Forty years ago, festival founders could only dream of such attention.

Back in 1976, when TIFF launched with the name Festival of Festivals, Hollywood studios feigned interest in the new Canadian showcase only to pull their films at the last minute, recalls co-founder Bill Marshall.

"The studios didn't believe in film festivals, particularly not in Canada," says Marshall, noting that changed when L.A. critics lauded the inaugural outing.

"So in '77 they all came back saying, 'Oh, we'd really like to help you.' They didn't mean it, but they tried.... They gave us things they thought were dogs."

That included Lawrence Kasdan's ensemble drama The Big Chill in 1983, a seemingly lightweight flick with a young cast including Glenn Close, Kevin Kline and William Hurt.

"They thought that was going to be a dog and it got huge ovations here and went on to be the biggest movie of the year and win all the awards," says Marshall.

"So that was the turning point."

Co-founder Henk Van der Kolk never imagined TIFF itself would grow this large."We weren't setting out to make the world's biggest and most successful film festival," he says.

"We set out to make a festival so we could get some notice for the Canadian film industry.... And boy, did it ever happen."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

BEST AT FEST

TIFF has grown into a giant

It's synonymous with stars — A-listers George Clooney, Matt Damon, Sandra Bullock and Helen Mirren are among those who repeatedly venture north to promote their films — and a key launching pad for Academy Award campaigns.

It's also synonymous with fans and red carpet mania: It's not unusual for the biggest premieres to attract hundreds of onlookers clogging sidewalks and shattering eardrums with their screams.

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‘A rock ’n’ roll chick till I die’

INTERVIEW

Diemonds’ Priya Panda talks work ethic and genres

SOUND CHECK
Alan Cross

Priya Panda, frontperson for Toronto’s five-piece Diemonds is in Calgary, heading for some Lebanese breakfast. It’s one in the in the afternoon, but when you tour as much as this band does, circadian rhythms tend to shift.

Panda — daughter of parents who immigrated to Canada from Mumbai — isn’t the kind of person many people would expect to see leading a hard rock band.

“I got my work ethic from them. My dad lived in a one-room shack with three of his brothers before he moved to Toronto with 60 dollars in his pocket and put himself through school and had four jobs while he did it. That’s my life now but in a different way, because I work tons of jobs just so I can play music.”

Being the female lead in a hard rock band is something she gets asked about a lot.

“Female-fronted is not a genre,” she says, “but it has become one in its own little way. And there’s not many of us out there. My new MO on this new album (Never Wanna Die, which is out now) is I want more women to be turned on to heavy and hard music where you can have a voice and a message. I don’t want to throw any genres under the bus ... but they don’t get to touch upon the things that I like to touch on, like things that are going on in the world.

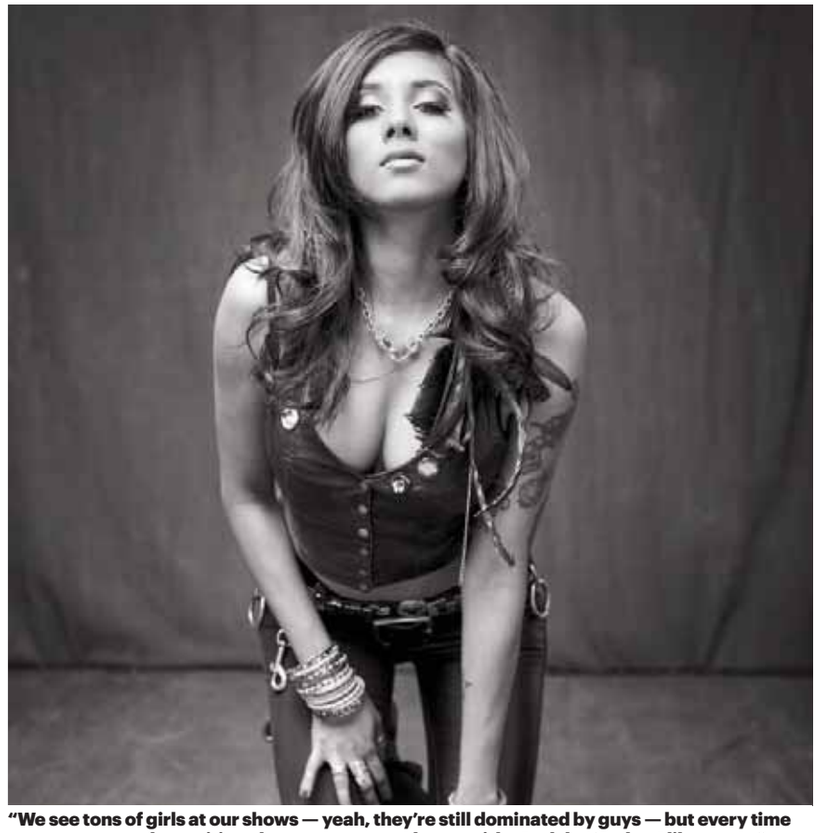
Panda — who has no trouble describing herself as “a rock ’n’ roll chick till I die” — still runs into other women who don’t appear to approve of her musical choices. “I do get flak from women. They see something they’d never do and they focus on that. It’s something that needs to stop. It’s crazy because women should be supporting each other.”

Strong women are among Panda’s biggest influences: Wendy O. Williams from the Plasmatics, Anne Boleyn from Hellion and especially Courtney Love. “I have hundreds of Hole bootlegs,” she confesses. There’s also Slayer, Slash and Avenged Sevenfold.

Is there a change coming? Is rock going to turn from the melodic sort of stuff to something harder based on loud guitars?

“I can’t f—ing wait!” exclaims Panda. “Guys who play banjos and ukuleles speaking of themselves. A me-me-me approach. It’s almost the exact opposite of rock. I want to go to a show be f—ing entertained! I like explosions and fire!”

Catch Diemonds on tour across Canada this fall, including a big album release party at the Hard Luck Bar in Toronto Saturday, Sept. 5.



“We see tons of girls at our shows — yeah, they’re still dominated by guys — but every time we come out to these cities, there are more and more girls. And that’s what I like to see,” says Diemonds frontwoman Priya Panda. HANDOUT

CAN’T WAIT TO MEET YOU, TORONTO.
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Where is the love? Vegas weddings down 37% over past decade; economy, notoriety cited

Cape Breton's new headliner

Cabot Cliffs sweeps along oceanside bluffs just to the north of Inverness. PHOTOS COURTESY CABOT LINKS

NOVA SCOTIA

Cabot Cliffs adds to island's world-famous golf reputation

Brian Kendall
canadiangolftraveller.com

Cape Breton has always punched above its weight among Canadian golf destinations. But the early rave reviews for Cabot Cliffs, the island's wildly anticipated new course, seems almost an excess of good fortune.

Set on soaring oceanside bluffs just outside the town of Inverness, Cabot Cliffs is the sister course of Cabot Links, a world-renowned seaside links that instantly became a flagship for the Canadian golf industry when it launched in 2011.

But Cabot Cliffs might be even more spectacular. No fewer than eight holes offer endless views of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Especially unforgettable is the 16th, a par three chiselled into a jagged cliff. The inland holes sweep through sculpted dunes and woodlands before returning to the sea.

Designed by Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw, golf's hottest design team, Cabot Cliffs is already being compared to Pebble Beach, Cypress Point and several more of the world's most dramatically beautiful courses.

Cape Breton, a Nova Scotia island of charming villages and panoramic vistas along the Cabot Trail, has long ranked among Canada's top golf destinations. Located in the quiet north shore community of Ingonish is Highlands Links, a Stanley Thompson-designed masterpiece that has anchored Maritimes golf since 1941. Rounding out a strong roster are Bell Bay Golf Club, The Lakes Golf Club and Le Portage Golf Club.

> **Golf has become as essential to the fabric of life in Inverness as it is in Scotland's St. Andrews.**

Clifftop drama: the signature par-three 16th at Cabot Cliffs.

Golf has become the lifeblood of local tourism. Before the opening of Cabot Links and the quietly elegant Cabot Links Lodge, Inverness was a hardscrabble former coal mining town where the big attractions were salmon fishing on the Margaree River and the twice-weekly harness races at Inverness Raceway. Townspeople also boast that their beach offers the warmest ocean waters north of the Carolinas.

Today, stylish new houses are under construction, real-estate prices are climbing, and the tired-looking main street is being given a facelift.

With tourists arriving from around the world, golf has become as essential to the fabric of life in Inverness as it is in Scotland's St. Andrews.

The original course, Cabot Links, is set just beyond the beach in the heart of town. Glimpses of the green and rumpled links are visible from almost everywhere in Inverness. A long public boardwalk extends between the beach and the fairways closest to the sea, enabling strollers to feel a part of the action.

And now, just to the north of town, Cabot Cliffs is welcoming golfers for preview rounds before its official launch next spring.

How lucky can Cape Breton get?

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The Skwachàys Lodge in Vancouver. COURTESY TOURISM VANCOUVER

Accommodations with a side of art

MORE THAN HOTELS

Where to find unique stays among murals, ice sculptures

ON THE MOVE

Loren Christie

If you are a culture vulture who prefers hotels that offer more than just bed and breakfast, consider staying at one of the following purveyors of the arts.

Cosy, with cocktails

With only 19 guest rooms, Toronto's Drake Hotel still manages to be the west end's epicentre of cool. From the hotel's inception, the promotion and sharing of art was always part of the guest experience.

There are site-specific installations throughout the hotel from conceptual installations to murals to kinetic sculptures. The collection is grounded in contemporary Canadian art with works by notable artists such as Ken Lum, Isabelle Hayeur and Evan Penny. The cocktail list is pretty memorable, too!

Aboriginal art

Opened in the fall of 2014, the 18-room boutique Skwachàys Lodge in Vancouver is perfect for people interested in British Columbia's aboriginal art scene. Six of the city's top hotel designers worked with six First Nations artists to create 18 unique art installations, one for each guest room. The hotel also features an artists' workshop, traditional smudge room and sweat lodge and is crowned by a rooftop totem pole that reaches high above the city skyline.

Owned by the Vancouver Native Housing Society, 100 per cent of the hotel's profits go toward providing safe and affordable housing for Vancouver's urban aboriginal population.

Keeping cool

The Hôtel de Glace outside of Quebec City is the only ice hotel in North America and, despite lacking some creature comforts (only a pillow and medium-sized mattress in the rooms), is a breathtaking work of art. Built over a six-week period and open only during the winter months, the hotel is redesigned every year by a combination of tradesmen and skilled artisans.

This past year's theme of space and time was represented in frozen sculptures of everything from a Japanese tea ceremony to the lunar landing, carved into the walls of the hotel. This year's theme will be announced in December.

Contemporary in N.Z.

If you are travelling internationally, a personal favourite of mine is the Museum Art Hotel in Wellington, New Zealand.

This 165-room European-inspired boutique hotel is perfectly situated in the city centre, opposite the city's stunning harbour and Te Papa, New Zealand's national museum.

Although one could endlessly people-watch the city's hipsters and trendsetters who frequent the hotel's Hippopotamus restaurant and bar, I could not take my eyes off the art.

Owner Chris Parkin showcases more than 100 ceramics, paintings and other contemporary pieces, like a limited-edition MV Agusta motorcycle, throughout the hotel.

NOT A TOURIST | A letter from Mark Stachiew in Germany

Hockey night in Frankfurt

Do you want to meet local people when you travel? Here's a tip: Attend a sporting event. You'll sit with thousands of them and the ones seated next to you are happy to talk, especially if you're rooting for the home team.

I've seen NHL games in several North American cities and met plenty of local fans, but few of them could top the enthusiasm I saw at a hockey game in Frankfurt. Yes, that Frankfurt, the one in Germany.

While soccer is king in Germany, the country has a professional hockey league known as the Deutsche Eishockey Liga. While the calibre of play in the DEL may not be up to NHL levels, it is plenty competitive and highly entertaining.

In Frankfurt, the fans cheer for the Löwen, or Lions, a team that plays at the Eissporthalle Frankfurt in the second tier of the DEL. There wasn't a moment during the game when fans weren't waving flags, clapping, banging drums and chanting songs. They only paused between periods in order to soothe their hoarse throats with generous portions of German beer while eating fistfuls of sausages and pretzels.

In many ways, it seemed that a horde of rabid soccer fans had been transported to a hockey rink, superimposing their rituals on a hockey game. Most wore the black, white and orange colours of the home team, but many sported NHL sweaters of various vintages or those of other European teams.

The opposition that night was the Dresdner Eislöwen. It was a back-and-forth affair that the visitors won 6-4, but even if the hometown fans didn't go home happy, I did because I knew that the sport Canadians love is in good hands in Germany.

Fans in Frankfurt wave flags, bang drums and hold sparklers aloft during a pre-game ceremony that is as epic as a Wagnerian opera. MARK STACHIEW/FOR METRO

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tico.ca Cuba

Sprinter Andre De Grasse is forgoing estimated six-figure endorsement deals to return to USC for his senior year

MVP chants grow louder

MLB

Donaldson leads AL in RBIs, runs, slugging pct.

When Josh Donaldson steps to the plate at Rogers Centre and the strains of Phil Collins' In the Air Tonight fade out, the crowd noise fills in with chants of "M-V-P! M-V-P!"

Sometimes it's just a few hundred fans, until the star Blue Jays slugger hits a home run and some 40,000 more join the call.

"I try not to listen to it too much, but it's nice," Donaldson said. "Obviously all year the fans have really supported me. So far this year it's kind of worked out, and we'll see how it goes."

To say it has "worked out" is the understatement of the year from the third baseman, a front-runner to be the American League's Most Valuable Player. Donaldson leads the league with a .589 slugging percentage, 111 runs batted in, 304 total bases and 104 runs scored.

He has passed and even lapped defending champion Mike Trout of the Los Angeles Angels by being at the forefront of the Blue Jays' surge into first place.

"I don't think we're anywhere close to where we're at without him," starting pitcher Mark Buehrle said. "If he doesn't win, I'd be disappointed."

Donaldson would be the first player in 31 years to win AL MVP honours after being traded prior to Opening Day. Toronto general manager Alex Anthopoulos pulled off the steal of the off-season by acquiring Donaldson from the Oakland Athletics for oft-injured third baseman Brett Lawrie.

The 29-year-old hit 29 home runs last season and 24 in 2013. Coming off an all-star appearance, expectations were that Donaldson would be an upgrade, but few could have predicted this.

"Two years in Oakland he had good years, but not this good," Buehrle said. "If somebody says they thought he was going to have this good of a year, I think they're crazy."

Donaldson, who hits second ahead of power righties Jose Bautista and Edwin Encarnacion in baseball's most feared and productive lineup, is batting a career-best .304 and already has 36 home runs with 29 games left.

Using the wins above replacement stat, which calculates value to a team if replaced by a bench player or minor-leaguer, Donaldson's 7.64 trails only Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Zack Greinke and Washington Nationals outfielder Bryce Harper.

"He's having a career year," Toronto starter Marco Estrada said. "What he brings on the field is everything. He's been our best hitter, his defence is incredible and he brings a lot of energy to the clubhouse. I'm glad he's on our side."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

.385

In 149 plate appearances with runners in scoring position, Donaldson is hitting .385 to Trout's .347.

Fans have firmly gotten behind the first-year Blue Jay. TONY GUTIERREZ/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Josh Donaldson is batting a career-best .304 with 36 home runs with 29 games left. STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

U.S. OPEN

Murray stretched to fifth set in second-round scare

Before they stepped on court, there was nothing to suggest Andy Murray would have any trouble against Adrian Mannarino in the U.S. Open's second round.

Murray, after all, is seeded No. 3, owns two major championships including one at Flushing Meadows in 2012, and had reached at least the quarterfinals at the last 18 Grand Slam tournaments he'd entered. Mannarino, meanwhile, is ranked 35th, has never won a tour-level title, and only three times in his career has even managed to win more than one match at a major.

So it certainly came as a surprise when, in Thursday's very first game in Arthur Ashe Stadium, Mannarino broke Murray. About an hour later, Mannarino slammed an overhead winner to grab the first set. And 45 minutes after that, a serve-and-volley winner gave the Frenchman the second set, too.

Murray is nothing if not resilient, though. Despite looking as if he might be ready to wilt on another steamy day at Flushing Meadows, Murray put together his eighth career comeback from a two-set deficit and beat Mannarino 5-7, 4-6, 6-1, 6-3, 6-1.

It gave Murray his 35th consecutive victory in a second-round Grand Slam match.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

14

Murray committed just 14 unforced errors in the final three sets — he made 21 in the first two.

Andy Murray lunges to return a shot to Adrian Mannarino on Thursday in New York. CHARLES KRUPA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NFL

Judge nixes ban on Brady

Tom Brady learned Thursday he will start the season on the field after a judge lifted the league's four-game suspension of the star quarterback for a scandal over deflated footballs, saying he was treated unfairly by NFL commissioner Roger Goodell. The league quickly appealed.

U.S. District Judge Richard M. Berman criticized Goodell for dispensing "his own brand of industrial justice" as he found multiple reasons to reject the suspension one week before New England's Sept. 10 opener against the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Tom Brady GETTY IMAGES

Roger Goodell GETTY IMAGES

The Super Bowl MVP has insisted he played no role in a conspiracy to deflate footballs below the allowable limit at last season's AFC championship game, a 45-7 rout of the Indianapolis Colts.

The judge cited "several significant legal deficiencies" in the league's handling of the controversy, including no advanced notice of potential penalties, a refusal to produce a key witness and the apparent first-ever discipline of a player based on a finding of "general awareness" of someone else's wrongdoing.

"Because there was no notice of a four-game suspension in the circumstances presented here, Commissioner Goodell may be said to have 'dispensed his own brand of industrial justice,"' Berman wrote, partially citing wording from a previous case.

Goodell said it was necessary to appeal "to uphold the collectively bargained responsibility to protect the integrity of the game."

He called the need to secure the game's competitive fairness "a paramount principle."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Argonauts 'still Trevor's team'

CFL

Ricky Ray will have to wait with Harris in MOP form

Ricky Ray has plenty of ground to make up with the Argonauts.

Toronto took the veteran quarterback off the six-game injured list Thursday, allowing him to practise for the first time this year. The 35-year-old Californian spent the first half of the season recovering from off-season shoulder surgery and said it felt "weird" throwing passes again.

"It feels like you're coming out from a long off-season and trying to get back into the rhythm of things," Ray said. "The only bad thing is everybody else has already done that.

"I've been watching for a long time but it definitely feels weird, it feels like I haven't done it in a while. I feel I've got the point where I can make most of the throws ... it's just about getting out there and throwing to some receivers and trying to get used to being out there again."

The six-foot-three, 210-pound Ray has enjoyed a successful tenure in Toronto since being acquired from Edmonton after the 2011 season. Ray led the Argos to victory in the 100th Grey Cup in 2012 and has been the East Division's outstanding player the last two years.

But Toronto (6-3) hasn't skipped a beat with backup Trevor Harris. The Argos are tied atop the East Division with arch-rival Hamilton heading into a crucial home-and-home series with the Tiger-Cats starting Monday afternoon at Tim Hortons Field.

"I'm excited to have Ricky back," Harris said. "He's a Hall of Fame player, he's a Hall of Fame teammate and he's always there as a good sounding board for me, so we welcome Ricky back with open arms."

Harris, like Ray in the final year of his CFL contract, leads the league in touchdowns (19), completion percentage (74.4) and efficiency rating (112.7) and is fourth in passing yards (2,453). Toronto head coach Scott Milanovich said while Ray will likely dress Monday, Harris remains the starter.

"He (Ray) is going to be active more than likely but he'll be the third-teamer," Milanovich said. "It's still Trevor's team.

"(Ray) has to prove to me and us he's fit and able to help us but we're not in a hurry with him."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

WEEK 11 PICK

Argonauts at Tiger-Cats, 1 p.m, Monday

It's an important contest for Toronto (6-3) as Hamilton (6-3) can clinch the season series after winning the first meeting 34-18 at Rogers Centre on Aug. 3. The Ticats had their 10-game win streak at Tim Hortons Field halted last month by Montreal but still lead the overall Labour Day series with Toronto 30-14-1. However the Argos are 5-4-1 in the last 10 meetings.

Pick — Hamilton.

Veteran slotback Chad Owens, left, and quarterback Ricky Ray were back at practice Thursday. Argos coach Scott Milanovich said Owens, who missed four games with an ankle injury, could see action Monday if he has no physical setbacks. CARLOS OSORIO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

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FIBA AMERICAS

Canucks keep their balance in victory

Nik Stauskas had a team-high 16 points as Canada earned its second straight victory at the FIBA Americas men's basketball championship, downing Venezuela 82-62 on Thursday.

All five of Canada's starters finished in double digits. Kelly Olynyk dropped 14 points, Andrew Wiggins had 13 while Cory Joseph and Anthony Bennett each had 10.

Nestor Colmenares led Venezuela (2-1) with 16 points.

Canada's Dwight Powell left the game in the first half after landing awkwardly on the floor. His status post-game was unknown, but he did return to the team bench for the second half.

The Canadians (2-1), who are looking to finish in the top two in the 10-team tournament to qualify for the 2016 Rio Olympics, wrap up the first phase of round-robin action on Friday against Puerto Rico (1-2).

THE CANADIAN PRESS

THURSDAY In Mexico

82	62
CANADA	VENEZUELA

Vaughan's Andrew Wiggins drives past Venezuela's Miguel Marriaga on Thursday evening in Mexico City. EDUARDO VERDUGO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

More honours for Seba

Toronto FC's Sebastian Giovinco has been named MLS player of the month for the second straight time.

The forward was rewarded after recording four goals and three assists in six games in which TFC went 3-3-0.

A candidate for MLS MVP, Giovinco ranks second in goals (17) and is tied for second in assists (13). His play earned him a call up to Italy's national squad, but an adductor injury is preventing him from representing the Azzurri.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

We've been having some good sessions so we'll be ready.

Canada midfielder Atiba Hutchinson. Canada faces Belize Friday night at BMO Field in a 2018 World Cup qualifier.

Iceland players embrace after silencing Wesley Sneijder, left, and Amsterdam Arena on Thursday.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iceland stuns Dutch to stay on top

EURO 2016 QUALIFYING

Netherlands now in danger of not making tournament

Iceland beat the 10-man Netherlands 1-0 on Thursday to take a big step toward qualifying for next year's European Championship. The Nordic island already stunned the Dutch earlier in the campaign with a 2-0 win in Reykjavik.

Arjen Robben's first match as Netherlands captain lasted less than a half hour before he left the pitch injured and was replaced by Luciano Narsingh.

And Danny Blind's debut as national coach went from bad to worse in the 33rd minute when referee Milorad Mazic showed defender Bruno Martins Indi a straight red card for making a striking movement with his arm as he tumbled to the ground in a tackle with Kolbeinn Sigthhorsson.

Blind, a former fan favourite at Amsterdam Arena in his playing days with Ajax, was loudly booed when he pulled off striker Klaas-Jan Huntelaar and replaced him with Jeffrey Bruma in an attempt to shore up the Dutch defence.

"This is not the scenario you have in mind for your first match as Netherlands coach," Blind said. The Netherlands travels to Turkey for a must-win match for both teams on Sunday. Blind said Robben would not travel to Turkey, though he said he did not know the nature of the injury.

> **"This is not the scenario you have in mind for your first match as Netherlands coach.**
> Danny Blind

"If you get four points from these two games, you have your fate in your own hands," Blind said as he explained the Huntelaar substitution on national broadcaster NOS. Gylfi Sigurdsson converted a 51st-minute penalty for Iceland after Gregory van der Wiel brought down Birkir Bjarnason.

In other Group A qualifiers, substitute Valerijs Sabala scored an injury-time equalizer as Latvia drew 1-1 with Turkey, and Milan Skoda scored both of his team's goals as the Czech Republic came from behind to beat Kazakhstan 2-1.

The top two in each group qualify automatically for France. The best third-placed team also qualifies automatically, and the other eight teams can qualify through a playoff. The results left Iceland at the top of the group ahead of the Czechs, with the Netherlands third, a point ahead of Turkey.
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OTHER RESULTS

UEFA European Championship qualifying — Group B
Belgium 3-1 Bos-Herce
Cyprus 0-1 Wales
Israel 4-0 Andorra

UEFA European Championship qualifying — Group H
Azerbaijan 0-0 Croatia
Bulgaria 0-1 Norway
Italy 1-0 Malta

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CHRISTINA FABIAN	1203-245 Roehampton Ave., Toronto, ON., M4P 1R6
TYNAN PHELAN	69 North St., Perth, ON., K7H 2T1
STEVEN THOMPSON	710-141 Davisville Ave., Toronto, ON., M4S 1G7
JAYA RAFIN	198 Rifle Range, Hamilton, ON., L8S 2L9

According to the Lease by and between the customers listed above and All Canadian Self-Storage and its related parties, assigns and affiliates in Order to perfect the Lien on the goods contained in their storage units, the Manager has cut the lock on their Unit(s). Upon a cursory inspection, the units were found to contain: Household goods, Items will be sold or otherwise Disposed of at this site on dates and at approximate times listed by the Addresses above to satisfy owner lien in accordance with the state statues. Terms of the sale are cash only. No checks will be accepted. All goods are sold In "as is" condition. Tax must be paid or resale numbers furnished. Buyers Must provide own lock if needed. Seller reserves the right to overbid. All items Or spaces may not be available on date of sale.

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RECIPE Mediterranean Burger with Tzatziki and Arugula

EAT LIGHT AT HOME

Rose Reisman
rosereisman.com
@rosereisman

Tzatziki is a Greek sauce made from strained yogurt and mixed with cucumbers, garlic, salt, olive oil and lemon juice.

Serves 4

Ready in
Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 10 minutes

Ingredients
Burger
- 1 lb ground lean beef
- 3 Tbsp diced onions
- 1/4 cup bread crumbs
- 3 Tbsp barbecue sauce
- 1 1/2 tsp garlic
- Salt and pepper
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp dried basil

Garnish
- 1/4 cup tzatziki (store-bought)
- 1 oz crumbled feta
- Tomato slices
- Cucumber slices
- Arugula

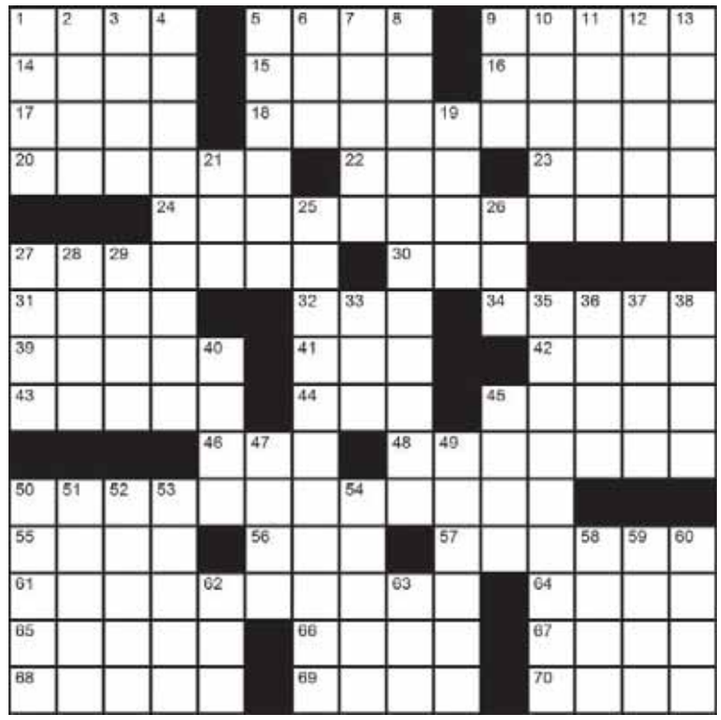
Directions
1. In a bowl, combine burger ingredients, mix well. Form into four burgers.
2. Grill or bake burgers at 400 F for approximately 10 to 12 minutes, or until temperature reaches 160 F.
3. Garnish with tzatziki, feta, tomato, cucumber and arugula.

Nutrition per serving
- Calories 230
- Protein 26 g
- Carbohydrates 10 g
- Fibre 1 g
- Total fat 8 g
- Saturated fat 3 g
- Cholesterol 110 mg
- Sodium 380 mg

PHOTO: ROSE REISMAN

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Mr. Cumming
5. Embassy worker, e.g.
9. Lathers
14. Shark type
15. "..._ _ tete, Alouette..."
16. 'The Hub' of Nova Scotia
17. Send forth
18. Beheld: 3 wds.
20. "Citizen Kane" (1941) estate
22. Big Apple newspaper, briefly
23. Sparkling wine city of Italy
24. Lotto Max's jackpot cap introduced this summer: 2 wds.
27. Environs
30. Do movies
31. Tennis great Mr. Nastase
32. US television station
34. Couches
39. Van _ & Arpels (Jewellery house)
41. Do movie soundtrack work
42. Farewell, to Catullus
43. Neutral tone
44. Seedy sandwich selection
45. Curt
46. 1977 Steely Dan album
48. Victoria, The _ Capital of British Columbia
50. Song from Hair co-written by Canada's very own Galt MacDermot: 4 wds.
55. "Away!"
56. L'Isle-_-Coudres, Quebec
57. Apply hairspray
61. Tweety's co-star Sylvester, for one: 2 wds.
64. "Right back _ _!" (Likewise)
65. Matthew McConaughey's wife Camila
66. Montreal-born singer Mr. Vannelli
67. "Jenny _": Paul McCartney ballad
68. 'Gang' suffixes (Criminals)
69. Canadian writer Mr. Martel
70. NASDAQ rival

DOWN
1. Charge card, e.g.
2. Priest of Tibet
3. Alike
4. Awake, basically: 2 wds.
5. Sumptuous
6. "Give _ _ rest already!"
7. _†the†Elder (Roman author of the encyclopedia Naturalis Historia)
8. Shakespeare... She who exclaimed "Out, damn'd spot! out, I say!": 2 wds.
9. Farm enclosure
10. L'_ (Cosmetics brand)
11. Also, in Abitibi
12. Prefix to 'type' (Mock-up)
13. _-_-law (Family member)
19. 'Synth' suffix
21. Nero's 502
25. Mode of transport in Churchill, Manitoba for tourists viewing polar bears: 2 wds.
26. Fire dept. ranks
27. Ancient Scot
28. "The Producers" (2005) role
29. Andre _ (Dutch violinist/conductor)
33. Purchase
35. Like a bank account without sufficient funds
36. 'Yukon's Best Kept Secret' town
37. To boot
38. Feel
40. Achievement
45. Baseball field covering
47. Comic actress Ms. Cusack
49. Songstress Sheena
50. "Como _?" = "How are you?" in Spanish
51. Grind to _ _
52. Figure out
53. Oxen harness maker, say
54. _-_ _ agent (Former employee of The Company)
58. Macy Gray hit: 2 wds.
59. Nautical ropes
60. "Titanic" (1997) star Billy
62. Mag. edition
63. Ms. Jillian

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
Someone will turn up the pressure on you today but you refuse to be beaten. There is a determination about Aries that makes you a formidable enemy. The more others attack the more you will dig in your heels.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Every suggestion you make lately seems to be met with disapproval. You won't change their attitude, so you might as well go off by yourself and do your own thing.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Something dramatic is likely to happen either to you directly or to others in such a way that it affects you as well. Keep your wits about you and no harm will come.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Your beliefs and opinions will come under fire today and there may be a very good reason for it. Could it be that some of your ideas went out of fashion years ago? Maybe it's time to bring yourself more up to date.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
You have huge responsibilities and you may be tempted to run away from them. But the only way to lessen the burden of your responsibilities is to fulfill them to the letter.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
If you like a challenge then you will enjoy what happens today. No matter how tough the task you face, or how strong the opposition, you must not back down.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You must trust your instincts even if everyone else seems to be moving in a different direction. Sometimes logic is not the best guide and sometimes it pays not to follow the herd.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Be friendly with everyone you meet today. Some people will be less than friendly in return but it's about how you choose to behave, not how a minority of idiots choose to react.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
There can be no more playing around — you must make a decision and you must make it now. It won't be easy and not everyone will approve, but if you don't act now you may never get the chance.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
It might be unwise to speak your mind today, even if you are in the right and someone else is in the wrong. You are going to have to work closely with this person in the future, so think before you speak.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Cosmic activity in the wealth area of your chart means you need to tighten your belt now so you can enjoy the benefits later on. The less you spend today the more cash will be available to spend tomorrow.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
Confrontation is likely today. Resist the urge to pull rank on people you work with, because they will get back at you.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

3				9				4
		6	8		2	5		
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